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Adventure

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BLACK LIGHTNING



MTALA, the Masai tracker attached to a British army patrol, prepared to fight for his life — against a lion! Behind the native, crouched eleven armed British soldiers—but they dared not fire their rifles. A Zulu watch-tower overlooked the narrow pass ahead, and in that year of 1879, Britain was at war with this fierce South African race. One shot would alert the Zulu sentry.



2—Knife in hand, Mkala edged as close to the lion as he could, without being seen from the watch-tower. The native took his stance, then waited tensely. Suddenly the huge cat became a tawny blur as it sprang at its victim. Second Lieutenant Bill Keene, the patrol commander, winced in horror. Mkala had offered to tackle the lion single-handed—now it seemed the native



would pay with his life! But the Masai are expert lion hunters and, the moment the animal started its spring, Mkala dived forward under the flailing fore-paws. Raking claws missed his body by a fraction as he plunged his knife deep into the lion's vitals. Man and beast crashed to the ground—but the lion was dead before it fell.

(Continued on back page.)

Nightingale becomes a human fly—to make sure he's in time for a vital wrestling match!

PROFS AT WAR.

"UTTERLY impossible," snapped Professor Browning, o shade peevishly. "Complete nonsense! In fact, bolderdash!"

The audience chuckled inwardly, or scowled angrily, depending on which side they supported. The other two men on the platform looked upset. One looked as if he were about to blow a valve at any second.

Professor Browning, Professor of Social Relations at Oxford University, punched the table again for emphasis.

"Professor Peabody declares," went on Browning, his lip curling and his voice rising, "that you can read a man's character by looking at his face. He claims to have proved it. This, I repeat, is utter rubbish."

Professor Peabody, of Liverpool, turned from beetroot red to purple.

"Peabody says that you can look at a man and say, 'That man is a schoolmaster,' or 'That man is a bank manager,' or 'That man is a crook,' went on Browning, warming to his work. "To this I reply—SO."

He flourished a hand, and the Upper Central Hall of the group known as the Acolian Halls in Oxford was abruptly plunged into darkness.

All at once a beam of white light cut through the gloom.

"Observe," commanded Professor Browning sharply, in his dry, rather high-pitched voice. "I have here some lantern slides. First, number one."

There was a click, and a picture appeared on the screen. It showed a young man, a faint smile on his lips, looking down at the people attending the lecture.

His eyes were blue, his regular white teeth gleamed, and the shine on his well-groomed hair was dazzling. He was six feet tall, and well built.

"Tell me, Peabody," snapped Browning, "what do you think this young man does for a living?"

"Well," Peabody began slowly, after a long pause. "I would say he is probably the younger son of an earl. He may be at Sandhurst doing his officer training, or he may be at university getting ready for the Foreign Service as a diplomat. He is a well-bred, cultured and self-confident."

"One of those words is correct," rapped Professor Browning, sounding pleased. "All right then, Peabody, how about this?"

There was a gasp of horror from the audience as a gigantic face flashed on the screen. Some of the women shut their eyes, and even the men found their hair standing on end.

The colour-slide showed a monster. One ear was a shapeless, pulped mass, a superb example of a cauliflower. The nose had been broken so often that it had lost all shape, and

NIGHTINGALE NOBBS



looked like a soggy lump of Yorkshire pudding.

A long scar ran from the left temple to the chin, and the gaping mouth revealed only three teeth. Its close-cropped hair made it look like an ape, while the eyes, bright and hypnotic, stabbed at the shivering audience.

"A criminal of the worst type," shouted Peabody. "From the slums of Chicago or Paris, a thug who has probably spent thirty years of his life in jail, only lived twenty-five years as it is—so how could I have done thirty years in jail?"

There was a petrified hush. The audience suddenly realised that the "Monster" was actually in the hall!

"How about the rest of this creature," Peabody? asked Browning, as another full-length shot of the monster-man flashed on the screen.

There was a whisper of

horror from the crowd for the man was not much over five feet, and just about as broad. His arms seemed extra-long, and right down to his waist he was covered with tattoo marks. A fully-rigged sailing ship in three colours ploughed across his massive chest, and a great snake coiled down his right arm.

RIOT RUMPU.

"IT'S probably a low-intelligence circus hand—a freak of a side-show, living on fish and chips and beer," Peabody burst out.

"Never touch the stuff," sounded the rusty voice of the monster-man. "You're right on the fish and chips, though, with meat pies and a few other things, like black puddings!"

"Peabody," Browning chuckled, as the lights clicked on, "you're a fool!"

Now, the Professor of Social Relations said grimly, "I've seen murderers who looked like angels. I've seen swindlers who would rob their

grandmothers of their last sixpence, and these men looked so trustworthy I would have given them my bankbook to look after."

"Who were your two subjects, Prof?" asked a student.

"And what are their professions?" rapped Peabody.

"They are both professional wrestlers," announced Browning, enjoying the sensation his words caused. "The first is called 'The College Boy,' the second is — 'Nightingale Nobbs'!"

There was a yell from the hall as the squat figure of Nightingale Nobbs ambled up the passageway.

"That's the mug who beat us up at the Madrigal Society," bawled one student. "Let's scrag him, chaps!"

The university debate on whether it was possible to tell a man's character from his face came to a sudden halt. Students rose and hurled themselves at the stocky figure of Nightingale Nobbs.

The little man grinned, making a nearby girl student faint, then there was a flurry of movement. Nightingale bent down, snatched the ankles of the student leading the rush, picked him bodily off the floor, and whirled him round his head.

The student screamed, and his friends drew back, afraid to move in closer. That was when Nightingale let the student go.

Head-first, the Oxford lad plummeted among his pals, knocking five of them in a heap to the floor of the hall. Howls of pain and rage rose from the students, and one bawled, "Charge!" But a louder yell cut through the din.

"Every student who brawls will be rusticated!" shouted Professor Browning. "Every one will be sent down!"

Abruptly, the riot ceased. None of the students wanted to be expelled from the university for the doubtful privilege of being bashed around by Nobbs!

"Please come to the platform, Mister Nobbs," the Professor of Social Relations invited. "I wish to exhibit you to the audience, and to this half-wit Peabody."

Nightingale Nobbs, Britain's ugliest man, ambled to the platform.

"Now!" began Browning, glowering at Peabody. "This is Nightingale Nobbs, contender for the heavy-weight wrestling championship of Britain. He is twenty-five years of age, and comes from London. He is not beautiful."

"He can say that again," commented an elegant youth on an attractive girl at the back of the hall.

"Shut up, Kevin," ordered the girl, who was Olive Browning, the professor's daughter.

She frowned at the tall youth,

who was none other than Kevin Barry, Britain's latest song sensation. Kevin's one and only record was climbing madly up the Hit Parade, and teenagers were flocking to his concerts.

But Kevin could not sing a note! The actual singing was done by Nightingale, out of sight of the audience, while the handsome Kevin "mimed" the words on stage.

In fact, that was why Kevin and Nobbs were in Oxford for a three-day visit. Kevin had given a concert, and Nobbs was to fight one more eliminator for the heavy-weight title of Britain.

Soon after arriving in Oxford, Barry had been chased by some live-crazy teenagers, and had taken refuge in a walled garden, which had turned out to belong to Professor Browning. Kevin and Nightingale had become friendly with the professor's daughter, Olive, and eventually the professor had met the two young men.

"Nightingale Nobbs," went on Browning, "has been tested by my colleague, the Professor of Psychology, and he has a very high intelligence. He has spent five years of his life in the Merchant Navy, and three in the Army, where he showed his intelligence by winning the Military Medal and remaining a private."

"As for The College Boy," said Browning scornfully, "he is neither well-bred nor cultured, though he certainly is self-confident. In fact, he's cocky! But his father wasn't an earl, he was a fishmonger in Manchester."

HELD FOR RANSOM.

"**H**ERE," he comes, chaps," a student whispered. "Get ready with the bag. This guy is pure dynamite."

"He didn't half pelt you one, anyway," sniggered a second student, looking at the giant black eye his friend was wearing. "I reckon I'll stay behind his back."

Nightingale Nobbs jogged into view through some trees in the park. It was the morning of his fight with The College Boy, in the Main Aeolian Hall in Oxford.

Suddenly something fell over the squat wrestler's head. There was a rush of feet.

"Got the blighter!" yelled a triumphant voice, as Nobbs fought to free himself from the bag that had been dropped over him from a tree.

Nightingale gauged the position of the yeller, then shot out a long straight right. There was a solid thud, and a howl of pain, then several hands grabbed Nightingale.

Fighting desperately to free himself from the bag and the hands, Nightingale was dragged to the ground. He felt a rope being wound round him.

Nobbs gave a mighty heave, and broke free for a second or so.

Finally, however, grabbed

by many hands and pulled to the ground again, Nightingale was wrapped in the big sack and roped as tight as a runaway steer.

"Get him down to the car," Nightingale heard a voice say.

Nightingale was carried for a short distance, then loaded into a car which drove off immediately. After a short trip, Nightingale's captors arrived at their destination. The squat little wrestler was unloaded and carried for a while with a great deal of grunting and groaning. Finally he was dumped down with obvious relief on a wooden floor.

Nobbs felt someone tugging at the rope that bound him, then there was a rush of feet, and a door slammed. Nightingale found that the rope round

him was slack, and in a few seconds he was clear of both rope and sack.

"Some lark!" chorled the little wrestler rustily, not at all upset by what had happened.

"Reckon it's one of two things," Nightingale told himself, looking around his prison. "It's either revenge for that bit of fun at the Madrigal Society, or a stunt connected with the Students' Rag Day. Probably a bit of both."

In that, Nightingale Nobbs was dead right. The lads who had captured him were those whom Nobbs had sailed into when they had "attacked" a meeting of the University Madrigal Society at which Kevin Barry was appearing. They had also grabbed him to hold him for ransom to help

with their Charities' Day collection.

"His manager ought to be good for a tanner," said the student with the black eye, half an hour later, as he walked into the lobby of Nightingale's hotel with another youth.

"Yes, ten pounds for a champion wrestler is reasonable," the other student agreed. "We'll tell him that Nightingale is out of commission unless he stumps up. Then we'll tell the Press boys and get a bit of publicity, too."

A tall man rose from an armchair. His eyes were glinting.

"Been having a bit of fun with a wrestler, chaps?" he inquired in a fruity voice.

"Yes," said one of the students. "Just a gag for charity. He won't come to any harm."

"It'll be Nightingale Nobbs, then?" suggested the tall man.

He towered above the students, and looked down on them in a rather disdainful way.

"That's the man," one of the students nodded. "But knowing won't do you any good, even if you are one of his pals. Nightingale's worth a ten quid ransom, after the trouble we had to capture him."

"I'll give you twenty pounds," announced the aristocratic man suddenly.

"Hot stuff!" the student exclaimed.

"Yes, twenty pounds—if you keep Nobbs out of the way till tomorrow morning. Is he in a safe place?"

"Only a bird could get out of where he is," the spokesman chuckled. "But how about the fight tonight?"

"Oh, that'll be all right," the tall man assured them.

"Nobbs will be able to fight tomorrow instead."

"Right-o!" the student agreed. "We'll keep him out of the way till tomorrow. That way we'll get even more publicity."

The tall aristocrat produced four five-pound notes and handed them over.

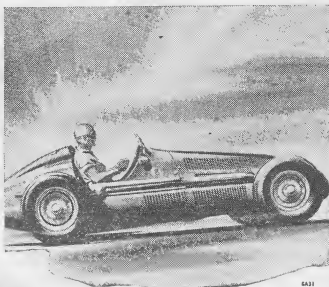
BELFRY BREAK-OUT.

"**A**LL I've been able to find out is that some students kidnapped Nightingale this morning and are holding him to ransom," announced Olive Browning in a worried tone.

"I've spread it abroad that any reasonable ransom up to ten pounds will be paid for him," muttered Kevin Barry.

Scott Lettis, the little concert promoter who was Kevin's manager, said nothing. It had been Scott's idea to get Kevin Barry to mime Nightingale's voice.

Secretly, Lettis hoped that Nightingale would miss the fight, then the wrestler would be able to concentrate on singing.



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"Nightingale's set his heart on the title," Kevin explained to Olive. "Let the students know that if he fails to turn up tonight he'll lose the fight and miss his chance for a title bout."

The day passed slowly, with Kevin and Olive frantically working to obtain information about Nightingale, but getting nowhere. Meanwhile, in his prison, Nightingale was beginning to grow a shade irritated.

"Holding me to ransom is one thing," he decided. "But starving me to death is another thing entirely. Reckon I'll have to get out of here."

He surveyed his prison again. It was a belfry!

Only one stout and apparently unbreakable door was set in the stone walls. High above, light filtered in from spaces covered with bars of wood set like a venetian blind. Two large bells hung on a wooden framework, but they had no clappers.

"Ups, a flipping daisy!" commented Nobbs.

He swung himself on to the framework of the bells, balanced on a beam, then catwalked along. Above the bells, he found a metal rod that ran down the side of the belfry.

"Can't be a lightning conductor inside the tower," Nightingale told himself. "May be a conduit taking an electric cable to the very top for a floodlight or something. I'll have a bash."

The stocky wrestler found that he could not get his massive hands round the slim rod, because it was pinned closely to the wall. He had to use a finger hold.

Nightingale, who had more power in his finger-tips than most people have in their entire arm, was not worried. Coolly, arching his back and pressing his feet against the wall, while clinging to the pipe with his fingers, Nobbs began to move upwards.

At last he reached the wooden grill high in the narrow belfry. It appeared secure and unbreakable.

Nightingale Nobbs bunched a giant fist. The punch he threw, as he hung by a thumb and two fingers from the slender pipe, travelled only six inches. Even so, Nightingale's fist smashed through the lattice of wood as if through paper.

Nobbs ripped away some spars, and thrust his hand through to grip some slates. A few seconds later, the entire wooden framework was smashed away, and Nightingale's broad shoulders were jammed through the opening.

The little man looked down the sloping roof of a steeple to the ground, well over one hundred feet below. Nobbs was perched nearly at the top of one of the highest towers in Oxford, the tower of St Salvator's Chapel.

"Down there, there's grub, and there's The College Boy," Nobbs reminded himself with

a rather grim chuckle. "Here goes!"

He levered himself out of the hole in the belfry, swinging down till his feet pointed to the ground, and he hung from the sill by his fingers.

"Going down!" muttered the stocky scrapper—and deliberately let go his grip.

He slithered over the slates, zooming towards a three-inch high parapet that stood between Nobbs and the hundred-foot drop to the ground. Nightingale's toes touched the parapet.

One foot slipped over, then the wrestler had the parapet in ten iron fingers. He pulled in the leg that was waving in air a hundred feet up, then he calmly sat on the tiny ledge to take stock of his surroundings.

K.O. FOR C. B.

FAR below, people moved about like ants.

For a minute Nightingale thought of shouting, then decided it was too undignified.

He swung himself off the parapet, toes searching for a niche in the stonework. Slowly, with nothing but a hundred feet of air below him, Nightingale began his descent.

Ten minutes later a student in the street looked up, and nearly died. High up on the College Tower, a man was clinging. The student's shouts quickly gathered a crowd, and

among the watchers was Kevin Barry and Olive Browning. They had been having a last forlorn search when they heard the commotion.

"It's all our fault," gulped a nearby student. "We landed him in this spot by kidnapping him early this morning. I wish we'd let him go, but after getting twenty quid to keep him—"

"What's that?" snapped Kevin. "Twenty pounds?"

"Yes!" The student nodded. "A tall, snobbish type gave us the money to hang on to Nobbs. Said it was some sort of joke."

"I'll say!" Kevin exclaimed grimly. "That was The College Boy! If Nightingale misses this fight, The College Boy gets a walkover, and Nightingale misses his chance at the title."

As the rapidly-increasing crowd watched silently, Nightingale made no mistake. Moving easily down the rugged stone wall, from tiny crevice to minute crack, he worked down nearer the ground every minute.

Suddenly he slipped. A horrified gasp rose from the crowd as the little wrestler hung by the fingers of one hand for a few seconds. Then Nightingale found another grip, and came steadily down to the ground.

When Nobbs was twenty feet up he suddenly let go and dropped to the gravel with a thud.

"What were you doing up there?" demanded a policeman

sternly, putting his hand on Nobbs' shoulder.

"Working up an appetite, chum," grunted Nobbs. "I always climb a tower before tea. Ask the students who shanghaied me!"

Nobbs shouldered his way to the side of his pal.

"Come on little man," he told Nobbs. "There's a huge meal waiting for you at the Prof's. Ask the students who shanghaied me!"

"I'll eat The College Boy, too," chortled Nobbs in his rusty voice. "He'll do for others."

"He was the guy who paid the students to keep you under cover," Olive Browning spoke up.

"Interesting!" Nightingale nodded briefly.

An hour later The College Boy walked confidently into the ring set up in the Grand Aeolian Hall. His jaw sagged when he saw Nightingale waiting for him.

"Hullo, Handsome," greeted Nightingale. "Been bribing any students lately? I'm here to give you some charity!"

The College Boy pulled himself together, and reminded himself that he was a foot taller and a stone heavier than Nobbs.

He was still thinking that when the bell went—closely followed by himself. He went right into the fifth row of the ringside seats and, by a curious coincidence, he was packed heavily on the group of students whose kidnap stunt had gone so sour.

The ref, generous with time like all wrestling referees, let The College Boy climb back into the ring. But the tall, aristocratic wrestler had no chance to recover.

Nightingale belted him all over the ring. He pulverised his ribs with double drop kicks, and smashed him with forearm blows that were delivered with sledgehammer force. Nobbs pitched the Manchester man around as if he were a feather-weight.

The fight lasted three rounds, and Nightingale did not attempt a fall in any of them.

Nightingale's victory over The College Boy around, bouncing him off the ropes, tying him in knots, throwing him with vicious flying mares, and generally treating him with contempt.

Finally, after half an hour, Nightingale pitched The College Boy in among the ambulance men, who picked the body up, since it happened to lie so handy, and carried it off. Nobbs was one step nearer the title, while The College Boy was one step nearer the infirmary.

"You can tell one thing from The College Boy's face now, Peabody," chuckled Professor Browning, who had insisted on dragging his debate opponent to the fight. "You can tell he's just lost a scrap to Nightingale Nobbs!"

Next week, an inter-Varsity boat-race becomes a riot—when Nightingale and Kevin take over a boat!

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Harry is faced with a nightmare golf shot—he must hit a shoe as well as the ball!

KEY CALAMITY.

AT half-past seven on a hot, misty morning, Harry Vale, a young British golf professional, walked on to the first tee of the Palmetto Club in Florida.

With a score of 72 on the previous day, Harry had just qualified for the second round of the Citrus Cup competition.

That had been a day he would never forget. He had done a hole in one for the first time in his life, winning himself a special prize of one dollar.

Two rounds were to be played on the second day. The twenty-four players who survived would receive \$50 dollars each and, of course, the chance to go for the trophy and the big money.

With his cap jammed over an eyebrow, Bud Shrout, a burly Yank, followed Harry to the tee. His jaws were champing at a wad of chewing gum.

Bud belonged to a syndicate with three other touring professionals. They pooled any prize money they won, in tournaments and shared it out equally.

These four took every chance to rattle a non-member of the syndicate.

Supposing, for instance, that Harry was kept out of the money, it would improve their chances of picking up some cash. The other three, Cal Kane, Len Fischer, and Gus Sherrick, had all won through to the second day.

Gus was going round with a pal of Harry's called Al Winters, a young and not very successful golfer nicknamed "Frozen Feet."

The period was the middle thirties, and Harry had come to America at the invitation of a P. Haxton. A millionaire golfer, Haxton had taken a liking to Harry, and meant to give the lad a chance to play in the big American tournaments.

Unfortunately Mr Haxton had died suddenly from a heart attack and Harry had been left stranded.

The marker came on to the tee wearing a sun hat and a white jacket and trousers. His name was Oscar H. Buston. He was a member of the

The WEE WHITE BALL



Palmetto Club, and full of gusto.

"Mornin', boys!" he exclaimed. "Haven't held you up, have I? I didn't hit the hay till after two. I got in a poker school with Pete Wayne. He never wants to go to bed."

It did not surprise Harry or Bud to hear that Pete Wayne, the wisecracking showman of big golf, had been playing cards at two o'clock in the morning.

Wayne was a law unto himself! Andy Galt, the Open Champion, would not have been found out of bed much after ten, and Tommy Varco, another leading golfer, always tried to get nine hours' sleep. Yet, in the first round Pete Wayne had shot a 67, Galt and Varco had returned cards of 68.

Buston spun a coin. Bud won the toss and took the honour. The hole was a par 4 with a narrow tree-lined fairway.

Bud hit a long drive. Harry teed up a ball and took his driver from his caddie, a sullen-looking negro named Chick.

Harry was very eager to play a low-scoring round—and follow it with another. Staying in a rut was not good enough for him. He was deter-

mined to reach the top.

howled Bud. "Okay!" rapped Harry. "I'm waiting."

"Cut it out, cut it out," gasped Buston. "I guess you'd be disqualified for fighting."

Bud, his face red with fury, stepped back and shouted at his caddie to look for the keys.

Harry signalled Chick to hurry up and bring his clubs along, then strode towards his ball. He felt fighting mad at the mean trick played by the Yank.

RECORD RECOVERY.

THE British golfer's ball was fully three hundred yards from the green.

"Brassie," he rapped. Chick produced the club with its steel shaft and wooden, weighted head.

Harry put all his strength into the shot, and his ball streaked towards the green.

"Gosh, you'll hit the green!" gasped Buston.

"No, I think it'll be just short," muttered Harry.

"Some shot none the less," burred the marker, as the ball came to a stop close to the green.

"It'll do," Harry admitted.

Bud put the ball on the green with his second shot.

Harry walked on fast. He saw his ball lying at the foot of a little fold in the ground six or seven yards from the edge of the green. The hole was six yards farther on.

Harry walked to the hole and looked back. He had enough confidence in himself to believe he could sink the little shot which was known as a chip.

Carefully he picked the exact spot where he wanted the ball to land when he pitched it on to the green.

Returning to the ball, Harry took his number five iron.

Chick shuffled over and held the flagstick. The caddie's clothes were ragged, and his big toes stuck out of holes in his canvas shoes.

"You won't sink it," jeered Bud. "Come on, you're getting as slow as Frozen Feet."

"I can try," retorted Harry and placed the club behind the ball. "Take the pin away, Chick."

The caddie lifted the flagstick out of the hole. Harry, keeping his eye on the back of the ball, played an easy, controlled shot.

Over the wrinkles in the ground flooded the ball. It landed where Harry had intended, then an excited shout broke from Oscar Buston as it ran towards the hole and dropped in!

"That's my three," Harry told Bud. "Now get yours!"

Bud needed two putts to get down.

SNUFF SHOCK.

HARRY had never played better since he landed in America than he did that morning.

His drives and long approach

"I'll knock yore head off,"

There are 400 species of birds in Britain.

shots were average, but again and again Harry laid his chips dead and needed only one putt to get down.

Even Chick brightened up a bit. He started to see the chance of picking up another three dollars, plus any tip that Harry might give him, for going round again in the afternoon.

When Harry moved on to the seventeenth tee he had scored 62. He would break 70 and return 69 by getting par figures, a three and a four at the last two holes.

The seventeenth was called the Island. The green, and just a strip round it, was surrounded by water and reached by a rustic bridge.

At that point Bud had 64 on his card. If he finished in par figures he was pretty certain to qualify for the next round.

The atmosphere was heavy and damp. Harry felt as sticky as treacle. The puzzle was to select an iron strong enough to reach the green, but not powerful enough to slap the ball into the water on the other side.

Harry made up his mind, and hauled his four iron out of the bag.

As the Briton shaped up to the ball, Bud who was standing well out of Harry's line of vision, fetched a snuffbox out of his pocket.

The American golfer snapped the lid open and offered Bustin a pinch. He knew the marker would take snuff.

It was done quickly, and Bustin thoughtlessly took a pinch of snuff, then sniffed it up. His nostrils twitched. "Atishoo!"

The marker sneezed shrilly as Harry was hitting down. As that happened before, Harry topped the ball.

It flashed away low. It touched the pool and raised a puff of spray, touched again and sped on like a skimming stone.

Its final hop carried it on to the Island. It gave a skip and stopped near the hole.

"You lucky son of a gun," spluttered Bud.

"Sorry I sneezed," gasped Bustin. "Couldn't help it, boy, it was the snuff."

Harry kept straight face. "I'm not complaining, am I?" he retorted.

Bud hit the green with his tee shot but finished farther away from the pin. He needed two putts to drop his ball into the tin.

Harry had a yard putt and sank it for a birdie two.

The rivals moved to the last tee. In the distance they could see the clubhouse and the marquees beside it. Many spectators were waiting to see the big-name players go out.

The green was 425 yards from the tee. Winding across the fairway in a series of S-bends was what the Scots would have called a burn, the English a brook, and the Americans a creek.

Harry aimed for the turf enclosed by a loop in the creek, and reached it nicely

with a drive of 270 yards or thereabouts. He gave a grunt of relief as he handed the driver back to Chick.

Bud's ball finished not far from Harry's, and they left the tee.

Harry's mind was on the next shot as he paced towards the ball. The entrance to the green was narrow. Below it on the left there was a plantation of recently-planted trees.

On the right was the biggest sand trap on the course. Seeing a match coming in, hundreds of spectators gathered around the green.

Harry decided to play his five iron. He lashed down at the ball. As he watched its flight he saw it was flying parallel with the plantation and closer to the trees than he had intended.

It looked as if he were going to be short of the green, but not badly placed. Since his chipper was working well that morning he was fairly well satisfied that the ball dropped.

As it pitched, it kicked away into the fringe of the plantation.

"Bad luck, boy, bad luck!" exclaimed Bustin.

"I lost two balls in that plantation while playing the practice round," grinned Bud. "Mebbe you'll be there with me," replied Harry.

Bud had no awkward bounce, however, and his ball finished in front of the green.

Harry crossed the brook by a plank bridge and strode anxiously away towards the plantation to look for his ball.

Chick was not far behind Harry, and Oscar Bustin caught up.

"Are you on the line, boy?" he asked.

"Yes, I marked the spot," replied Harry. "It just missed this bush."

He pointed to a prickly bush at the edge of the plantation, and the golfer started to look for the ball.

There was spiky grass between the trees and Harry began to think the ball would not be found. In that case he would have to return to the spot where he had played the stroke and drop another ball. A penalty shot would be added to his score.

Bud strolled over. He did not appear to be looking very hard.

"I guess you're unlucky, boy," sighed Bustin. "After you fine round it's real tough luck."

Chick's voice suddenly rang out.

"Here's de ball!" exclaimed the caddie hoarsely. "It's lodged in an ole shoe, sub."

SHOE FEAT.

CHICK pointed down. The ball was lodged in the broken-backed heel of a mouldy shoe.

"You must play the ball where it lies, bo," chortled Bud.

Harry frowned doubtfully. "What's your ruling?" he

asked the marker.

"I guess you'll have to play it where it is," Bustin muttered.

There was just one bright spot in the situation. Harry could play straight to the green. There was no bush or tree to avoid.

Chick passed Harry his eight iron.

Harry shuffled into his stance and made sure he could take his club back without striking the nearest tree.

When he hit down, the shoe flew to bits, but the sole and part of the upper sailed towards the green with the ball.

Startled shouts broke from the crowd when they saw the shoe drop on the green.

The ball stopped on the edge. It was a long way from the hole, but Harry was mighty glad to see it there.

Bud pitched up to the hole and was sure of his four and a total of 71.

The news spread through the hole that the British had in the creased grey flannels had taken 67.

Harry was confronted with a 20-foot putt. There was a hush as he putted, then a buzz of excitement as the ball ran towards the hole.

When it was a foot away it gave a little skip. This turned it aside and it finished six or seven inches from the tin.

While the crowd groaned in sympathy, Harry walked to the ball and took care with the right putt ball dropped and so he finished in 68. It might so easily have been 68.

As Harry moved off the green Andy Galt beckoned to him. Galt was the American Open champion.

"How did you come to play the shoe on to the green?" he asked with a hint of a smile in his keen, grey eyes.

"The ball lay in the shoe," Harry replied.

"You robbed yourself," rapped Galt. "Serves you right for not knowing the rules."

"I thought I did know them," Harry blurted out.

"You couldn't have studied them carefully," replied the champion. Rule Eleven was that a ball lying on, or touching, clothes

can be lifted and dropped without penalty—and I'm darned sure a shoe is an article of clothing."

Harry could have kicked himself for overlooking this clause.

"It's come back to me now," he muttered.

"Bud Shroud could have told you," went on Galt. "Still, you could hardly expect him to open his mouth."

That was true enough. In the cut and thrust of competitive golf a player could hardly expect to get advice from an opponent.

On the other hand Bud had opened his mouth to deceive Harry and he declared that the ball must be played where it lay and, in the stress of the moment, Harry had done so.

RAIN TROUBLE.

IN the afternoon Harry had another excellent round.

He maintained his chipping touch and was round in 70. Thus his aggregate for the three rounds was 211.

Players with a total of 216 qualified. Harry had, therefore, finished the three rounds with an ample margin, and needed another fifty to the hundred dollars he had already won.

Harry was pleased when his friend Al just qualified, assisted by a birdie on the Island hole. Of the syndicate, Bud Shroud and Cal Kane qualified with scores of 214.

None of the big-name players came a cropper. Andy Galt, Pete Wayne and Tommy Varco tied with aggregates of 207.

The winner next day would receive 2500 dollars. The second prize was 1250 dollars, and the third 750 dollars. The fourth prize was 500 dollars and the fifth 250 dollars. Another five prize-winners, out of the twenty-four qualifiers, would receive 100 dollars.

Harry, therefore, had the opportunity of winning a substantial sum. At the moment, he was definitely in the running for the third prize.

He was a sturdy fellow, but he felt as limp as a rag-bag when he reached the cheap rooming-house in the town where he was staying.

The purple thunderclouds were massing, and there were flickers of lightning as, with five other guests, none of them golfers, he sat down to supper.

The meal was just about finishing when there was a terrific crash of thunder accompanied by a dazzling flash of lightning. The clouds opened and rain came down in solid sheets.

The deluge lasted about an hour, and in the course of the storm the electric lights went out and were not restored.

The local people took it calmly. Harry wondered what the effects of the storm would be on his course.

Ed Bales, the proprietor of the rooming-house, was no golfer fan, but declared he had never heard of the course being shut down after a storm.

As the thunder rumbled away into the distance, Harry groined his way up the creaking stairs to his room. He undressed in the dark and climbed into bed.

He felt as if he had stepped into a bath. The roof was leaking badly, and the young golfer's bed was soaking wet. And, Harry made his way downstairs again.

"I sure must get that roof fixed some time," shrugged Bales when he heard what had happened.

"Aye, it needs it," growled Harry. "Where am I going to sleep?"

"It's awkward," sniffed Bales. "There isn't another bed. I guess you'll have to make do with the floor."

(Continued on Page 9.)

A volcanic eruption has recently been seen on the moon.

at which the British athlete was due to turn out was in a few days' time at the El Dorado stadium.

As in the other meetings, he had been entered for the sprints. The sports promoter was very reluctant to switch him from these, and put him down for the Quarter-Mile.

"I'll be a big disappointment for the crowd, John," he pleaded. "They saw you put up a great performance today against Harrison Willard, and they'll come flocking to see you have a return match with Willard at El Dorado. I gotta think of the cash customers, y'know."

"Sorry, Mister Kirchoff," Baker replied, "but I think this is one time when there are more important considerations on hand than the cash customers."

"Look, I promise you this. Just let me have one crack at the Four-Forty at El Dorado, then if I don't manage to do anything special, well, I'll just have to give this whole idea up."

In spite of his objections, Kirchoff let himself be persuaded in the end. John Baker found he would be running in an event against men who had nearly all beaten forty-seven seconds, while his own best time was forty-eight seconds.

ROW WITH WILLARD.

THE meeting at El Dorado was the last big affair of Sam Kirchoff's current programme.

Many of the athletes who had competed at the other meetings held at Santa Martha, Pacifico and elsewhere in California, were turning out.

The announcement that John Baker, of Great Britain, would run in the 440 Yards instead of the 220 Yards caused disappointment among the spectators. It almost caused a fight in the dressing-room, too! "What's the matter, Limey?" a tall, powerful, dark-skinned runner said to Baker. "Why're you not running in the Two-Twenty?"

"It simply happens that today I choose to compete in the Quarter, Willard," John said evenly.

The joint world record holder for the 220 Yards sneered. His defeat at Baker's hands a few days before, still rankled.

"I reckon you're scared," he said.

"Oh, dry up," Baker snapped. "If you really want to know why I've chosen the Quarter-Mile today, it's because I think there might be a smell in the Two-Twenty!"

Willard let out a howl of rage, and moved forward threateningly. John Baker stood his ground, though the other man topped him by three inches.

Suddenly a voice spoke from the extension speaker run into the dressing-room from the public address system.

"Competitors for the Two-

Twenty Yards," the voice announced. "All out, please!"

Some of the tension went out of the atmosphere. Harrison Willard unclenched his hands.

"Okay, Limey," he said softly. "I gotta go now. My business with you will have to wait. But just bear this in mind. I'm the sort of guy that never forgets an insult!"

Willard turned and went out. However, John could not afford to waste time thinking about his bullying rival, for the heats of the 440 Yards were scheduled to take place shortly.

All his strength, all his

Sam Kirchoff came over as John completed his loosening exercises.

"Good luck, young feller," he said gruffly. "I reckon you're gonna need it."

TOUGH COMPETITION.

BROWDER and Josh Moore were among the competitors in the first heat of the invitation quarter-mile, while Baker and Vaquero were included in the second.

The Britisher and the Panamanian stood together,

together, in the same time of 46.6 seconds. Obviously they did not exert themselves much over the last fifty or sixty yards, conserving strength for the final.

The Quarter-Mile is a tough race. In the old days people thought of it as a true middle distance race. Now they regard it almost as a long sprint.

Indeed, it is a long sprint, if you remember that a time of 46 seconds means two 23-second Two-Twenties! And there is many a humble sprinter who feels pretty bucked with himself if he runs the individual 220 Yards in 23 seconds!

Just as ideas about the nature of the race have changed, so have ideas about how it ought to be run. In pre-war times "even-pace" running was the great key. Keep going at a steady speed over the whole distance, people advised.

Nowadays even-pace running is not such a popular theory. There are two other schools of thought.

One school says go like a bomb over the first 220 Yards, then hang on for the second, hoping that your initial speed will open up such a gap between you and your opponents, that they will not be able to catch you.

The other school says you should run at a moderate speed over the first 220 Yards, keeping plenty in reserve, then throw that reserve into your final effort.

Not having as much experience of big-time Quarter-Miling as the other competitors, John had decided to proceed cautiously.

It was a bit of a blow when he drew the outside position, in lane six, for the start. This meant he would have none of his opponents in view, while they would have him as a target to aim at.

In a six-lane quarter-mile track, where the lanes are four feet wide, the outside lane is over forty yards longer than the inside one, and as a result, the start is "staggered" so that each competitor will run the same distance.

This stagger only "unwinds" completely when the runners are well on the banking of the home straight. In a staggered start the man in the inside lane—in this case Vaquero—is at a big advantage over the other runners. He can see them and use them as his markers, while the one who does not know what mischief he is getting up to behind their backs.

A little worried about the unfavorable position he had drawn, John Baker got down to his starting blocks.

"LOOK AT THE LIMEY!"

"ON your marks," the starter shouted, then paused as the runners settled on their blocks. "Get set!"

There was an instant's breathless silence, then the



TO ALL READERS
ANOTHER NINE STICKY-BACK
PHOTOS OF THE FOLLOWING
UP-AND-COMING SPORTS STARS—

Joe Hayes, David Wilson, Peter Dobing, John Band, Fred Elkin,
Maurice Setters, B. H. Mason and Muriel Elliot, R. McGaggor,
K. Collins.

with
ADVENTURE
NEXT TUESDAY

energy, all his mental determination would be needed, if he hoped to make any impression at all against the fine field of runners who were turning out against him.

The most dangerous were Earl Browder of U.S.A., who had several times done a personal best of 46.1 seconds; Josh Moore, also of U.S.A., who had once returned the same time; and Vaquero, of Panama, who was a pretty consistent performer in the region of 46.3 seconds.

John Baker had already done some warming up before coming to the stadium. Now, as he did a final muscle-relaxing trot round the outside of the track, John cast an eye over his opponents.

There was no doubt that they looked pretty dangerous customers, particularly for a man turning out in an event that was not his speciality.

watching the first bunch do their stuff.

"Them guys go well, don't they?" Vaquero said.

He spoke English fluently, with an American accent. Like many athletes from Central America, he had done most of his running in the western United States.

"They certainly do," John Baker agreed.

"What about you, fella?" Vaquero glanced curiously at his companion. "You're a Two-Twenty man ain't ya? This gonna be your first Quarter in the big-time?"

"Yes," John said. "Quarter-Miling in this class is a new experience for me."

A flashing smile split the coloured man's face.

"I'll be doing my best to make it an interesting experience for ya!" he said.

The first heat ended. Browder and Moore strode home to-

gun fired. At once Vaquero shot away with great bounding strides. The other competitors also got away, but evidently determined to run their first furlong at almost top speed.

By contrast, John Baker's initial effort was so slow, that he almost seemed to be walking. His striding was long and powerful, and his action was well-balanced, but there was no real pace in his movements. Almost at once the men in the inside lanes began to come up on him, partly because of the "unwinding" of the stagger, and partly because they were running much faster.

"Come on, Limey!" a derisive voice shouted from the crowd. "What d'ya think this is, a walkin' race?"

John was well aware that the men in lanes four and five had made past him, and he must take some catching, since the stagger still operated in their favour round the last bend.

But in the middle of the back straight, just before coming up to the end of the first 20 Yards, he had a shock. Glancing sideways at the very inside lane he saw that Vaquero had drawn level with him, and the stagger would still be in the coloured man's favour round the last bend.

John was going to have to run the second 220 yards at least two seconds faster than Vaquero if he were to be anywhere near him at the finish.

Baker was at a tremendous disadvantage. He had let him- be caught napping. For a moment the shock seemed to deaden his limbs.



(Continued from Page 6.)

DANGEROUS SPECTATOR.

HARRY was walking up the drive to the clubhouse next morning when there was a whistle behind him. Al Winters caught up with him. It was a morning of steamy heat.

"Get any sleep?" asked Al, who was staying at another cheap rooming-house. Harry said, "What about you?" "I didn't sleep too well," Al replied. "The place was crawling with cockroaches."

Just then, a taxi swept past bringing Pete Wayne along from the posh hotel where he was staying. Harry and Al saw no signs

He had already run 220 Yards in somewhere around 24 seconds. How could he hope to cover another such distance in 22 seconds with fatigue building up in his bloodstream? These other men simply had to hold on to their effort. He had to increase his, and increase it very considerably.

At that moment he thought of Richie Logan, and of all that was at stake in this race. The shock ebbed away!

Controlled fury surged up in his mind. He let himself go, not straining tensely, but mentally throwing a switch and letting power pour into his limbs.

The crowd had already written the British off as a possible winner of this heat. Vaquero was going like a whirlwind, and John Baker and with quite a considerable lead over his other opponents.

Round the last bend the final stages of the stagger unwound. Entering the straight Vaquero was leading by five yards, with his nearest opponent, while over ten yards separated him from John Baker.

But the fact that the lead was a matter of ten yards, instead of twenty, escaped the attention of the crowd.

The Britisher had pulled up terrifically from his unfavourable position at the half-way stage. He knew it, and the knowledge inspired him.

These other men had all shot their bolts. They were only hanging on, driven along by an antelope's sense of urgency, down by fatigue. He still had a

of surface water on the greens and fairways, but the lazy little creeps of the previous day had swollen to torrents.

The two lads made straight for the noticeboard to find out their starting times.

With comparatively few players left in the competition, compared with the 150 holes on the first day, the first pair were not going out till ten o'clock.

Harry discovered that he was again paired with Bud Shroust and that they were going out first. Al had to play round with Cal.

The pair who would draw the crowd were Andy Galt and Pete Wayne, who were starting out at eleven o'clock.

Oscar Buston was again Harry's marker. "Let's hope you don't find any old shots today, boy," Buston remarked.

"I'll know what to do if that happens," said Harry meaningly.

Both Harry and Bud started well, and after four holes they had not dropped a shot.

They reached the long fifth, a par 5 hole.

A creek had overflowed and the water came nearly to the edge of the fairway on the left side.

Harry lashed into the ball with his driver. As his head came up, he saw the ball was to

store of energy left.

His finishing drive took him past two opponents and up to a third. There was still about fifty yards of the home straight left, and still a big gap separating him from Vaquero. Was he going to be time? Was he going to run out of track?

Heads were going back now as Vaquero, desperately towards the finish. John Baker did not struggle. He ran! "Look at the Limey!" someone shrieked. "For Pete's sake, I thought he'd been left out of this race. If Vaquero doesn't look out, Baker's going to catch him!"

And he did! With twenty yards to go, Baker had passed four men, who floundered as if they were in a quagmire. Steadily he caught up on the Panamanian.

Vaquero fought with all his strength, warned by the crowd that something was happening behind him. Ten yards from home, he cast an agonised glance over his shoulder to see where the danger lay.

And he glanced the danger drew level, and surged past him through the tape! John Baker had won the first 440 Yards race he had ever run against world-class competition, and he had won it from an apparently hopeless position!

"Well done, boy!" Sam Kirchoff grinned. "A time of forty-six point five sets you 'way up among the big noises at this game. Do you know you did the first furlong in twenty-four point three and the second in twenty-two point two? I've never seen anything like it

the left of the line he had intended.

"You'll be in the reeds, boy," chorried Bud, said Harry a moment later.

"Because the turf was soggy, the ball came to a stop at the edge of the fairway, which seemed lucky for Harry."

After Bud had hit a good shot down the middle of the fairway, they left the tee. Followed by Chick, Harry squelched towards his ball.

Since it had not buried itself, Harry knew he could play a full shot and asked Chick for his brassie.

Harry took his stance and was about to swing when he heard a rustle in the reeds.

"Look out!" Chick yelled. At the sight of the ugly snout that protruded from the reeds, Harry made the standing leap of his life.

An alligator crawled out of the rough while the golfers, caddies, and marker scuttled back out of its way.

"I'll be okay," Buston exclaimed. "I've never known a 'gator attack a man out of the water."

The alligator turned back almost at once and they heard it splashing away through the mire.

"Hey, where's de ball?" Chick squawked. "Did dat 'gator pick it up?"

The alligator had not

before."

Gaspings, John nodded his head. "What do you think my chances are in the final, Mister Kirchoff?" he asked, when he had recovered his breath.

The grin faded from the sports promoter's face.

"Well, that's a different story, isn't it? The Moon are very strong boys. They don't fall down easy."

"Look," the British athlete said, "I'm determined I'm going to win that final. And I'm determined to set a world mark in doing so."

"Aw, for the love of Mike," Kirchoff began.

"I know what you're going to say," Baker cut in. "It's extremely doubtful whether I can get anywhere near forty-five point nine seconds. Okay."

"Now there are two things involved in breaking a world record. The first thing is that I must be number one at the finish. That's up to me. The second is that a time of forty-five point eight should be recorded. That's up to you."

"Up to me?" Sam Kirchoff stared as if his young friend had suddenly grown two heads. "How in the heck can I arrange for you to show a world record time?"

"Quite simple," John Baker said in a slow, deliberate voice. "You'll fake a world record by fixing the electric timing mechanism!"

Will Sam Kirchoff agree to cook the time in the final? You'll find out next week!

pinched the ball but, in passing over it, had pressed it so deep into the ground that only a bit of white was visible.

Even Bud did not do any arguing when Harry said he was entitled to grub the ball out and drop it.

A ball at rest that was displaced by an outside agency could be dropped without penalty, stated the rule.

Harry made sure that the "outside agency" was not near enough to grab an ankle, then he faced the hole and dropped the ball over his shoulder.

When he looked he discovered that the ball had come to rest in a heel mark.

The alligator had broken Harry's concentration, and he did not play a good shot. Instead of striking the ball cleanly, he hit the ground just behind it.

The ball travelled only a hundred yards or so.

Harry took a grip on himself again, but that wasted shot led to him taking six for the hole—and one shot might easily make all the difference between being in the money and out of it.

Just to rub it in, Bud, on the green in three, sank a long putt for a birdie four.

Next Tuesday, a golfing enemy helps Harry—by trying to keep him out of the prize-money!

SMILERS PRIZE PAGE



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Write your entry on a postcard, state the prize you prefer, and send it off to:—

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POSTAL ORDER



BOX OF
TRICKS

This is a tip for campers who do not want to land up with wet matches. Before going camping, dip the heads of the matches in nail varnish and let them dry. Then, however wet the matches get, they will always strike, as the nail varnish makes them waterproof.

—Wallet to G. Shaw, 42 Birch Coppice, Quarry Bank, near Brerley Hill, Staffordshire.

On the second of November 1912, Georges Pouliquen a French Canadian, who at the time was bath master at the "Piscine de la Gare," set up a new world record for staying under water, without apparatus. It was 6 minutes 29.8 seconds, so beating the previous record by 1 minute 43.6 second. But 43 years later, in 1955, a Frenchman, Guy Cadieux entered the water wearing a frogman's outfit, at 9.49 a.m. on 28th March and emerged 25 hours 6 seconds afterwards.

—Postal Order to G. Miller, 30 Hornton Street, London, W.8.

Jenkins—"I thought Robinson had retired from the office because of loss of memory."

Drake—"That's right."

Jenkins—"But I saw him there today."

Drake—"Yes—he forgot all about it!"

—Postal Order to A. Finlayson, 6 Queens Park Avenue, Edinburgh 8.

A poultry-keeper, when asked how many birds he had, answered, "They're all chickens but two, all ducks but two, and all geese but two." How many birds does he have?

—Three-Colour Signalling Torch to A. Ashworth, 79 Irms Avenue, Lancing, Sussex.

Visiting Player—"Not much grass here, is there?"

Home Player—"What about it? You came here to play football, not to graze!"

—Postal Order to J. Saphier, 23 Green Lane, Thornton, Liverpool, 23.

—Wallet to J. McNulty, 37 Park Road, Carmyle, Glasgow, E.2.

—Penknife to M. Thomas, 30 Aneurin Road, Barry, Glamorgan, S. Wales.

Where are happiness and contentment always to be found?

In the dictionary!

—Postal Order to S. Lockyer, 70 The Causeway, Petersfield, Hants.

An American firm produced a watch, the hands of which could be worn and tell the time—yet with the mechanism miles away in the wearer's home. The hands were moved by wireless waves transmitted from the mechanism.

—Walter to M. J. Gandy, 15 Laburnum Drive, Oswestry, Shropshire.

Father—"This report is disgraceful. Where did you get it?"

David—"In the attic. It's one of yours!"

—Three-Colour Signalling Torch to J. Jenkins, Braeside, 52 Winterbourne Close, Lewes, Sussex.

It is well known that the sun radiates a tremendous heat, but just how great this heat is, can be shown by the following fact. It has been worked out that if the total solar radiation could be concentrated to a solid column of ice two and a quarter miles in diameter stretching from the earth to the sun, a distance of about 93 million miles, it would melt the ice in one second and the resulting water would be turned to steam in not more than eight seconds.

—Postal Order to J. Hunter, 38 Easter Couston Road, Causewayhead, Stirling.

—Penknife to M. Thomas, 30 Aneurin Road, Barry, Glamorgan, S. Wales.

—Walter to M. J. Gandy, 15 Laburnum Drive, Oswestry, Shropshire.

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Teacher—"Alec, can you tell me the present tense of 'knew'?"

Alec—"No, sir."

Teacher—"Quite correct!"

—Box of Tricks to G. Kennedy, 31e Cromlix Road, Friarton, Perth.

Do you know how rubber was first discovered? The discovery should really be credited to the early inhabitants of Haiti.

In the late 15th Century, Columbus was said to have seen the natives playing with a substance rolled into a ball which bounced. This substance oozed from the bark of a certain tree and was in fact, rubber.

—Shoot Football Game to R. Fraser, 40 Redhill Avenue, Southdown, Kirkby, near Liverpool.

First Neighbour—"Did you say your dog's bark was worse than his bite?"

Second Neighbour—"Yes."

First Neighbour—"Then please don't let him bark. He just bite me!"

—Walter to R. Startin, 39 Somerford Road, Weoley Castle, Birmingham 29.

A man who usually received several letters a day, went to Paris on holiday, telling his servant to send on his letters. A week later, no letters having reached him, he wired to the servant, "Why haven't you sent my letters?" The servant wired back, "Because, sir, you've taken the key of the letterbox with you."

So the traveller sent back the key—but still no letters reached him. Why?

The mill-clocked letterbox.

—Shoot Football Game to D. Lewis, 4 Queen's Road, Eymouth, Berwickshire.

—Three-Colour Signalling Torch to M. Fagg, 438 Cadogan Road, Camp Hill Est., Nuneaton, Warwick.

—Walter to P. Donner, 62 Newhouse Crescent, Gorton, Walford.

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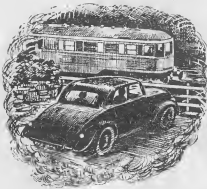
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Three ordinary happenings in Syd's life—yet they make him a success on TV!



SYD THE QUIZ KID

ROUGH GAME.

SYD SUTTON made a great leap for the ball as it was thrown in at a line-out.

He was playing as a forward for Midshire against Clayshire, in a County Championship rugby match at Bramington on a Thursday afternoon. With only a few minutes to full-time, each team had scored twelve points.

Syd caught the ball, then dropped. Play was near the Midshire goal line, so safety-first tactics were called for, and it was vital to gain ground.

Syd ducked and barged his way through a gap in the hefty Clayshire forwards. Somebody tried to tackle him, but he was able to break out of it and keep going. Before Syd was grounded by a mass onslaught, he had carried the ball eight or ten yards.

Everybody piled upon Syd, and, as the ball could not be played, the referee blew his whistle for a scrum. Player after player scrambled up. Syd, rather breathless after being squashed on the muddy ground, was naturally the last to rise as he had been at the bottom of the pile.

Syd, a burly young man, was a real all-round sportsman. He had been selected by the Amateur Boxing Association to represent England in the light-heavy-weight class in a forthcoming match with Belgium. Another engagement was to take part in an international water polo trial.

By occupation, Syd was the assistant porter at Crampshurst University College, and he had recently appeared on TV. He had been pushed into a quiz

when a student had suffered from severe stage fright at the last moment.

Syd was playing in the middle of the back row, and he shoved like a bulldozer when the ball was put in.

The Midshire hooker heeled the ball, and it came back and passed between Syd's legs. As the scrum-half snatched it up, Syd was heavily bumped by a Clayshire forward who was trying to get round the scrum and flatten the little half-back.

The scrum-half had time to pass, and he hurled the ball to Vic White, the Midshire skipper, who played at stand-off.

To try and gain more ground, White put in a long, high kick for touch. Realising that the kick was inaccurate, and that the ball was not going out, Syd found the breath from somewhere and hared up the pitch.

The ball landed inside the field of play, but bounced awkwardly for the Clayshire full-back. He had to run back several yards to gather it.

Seeing Syd and other opponents charging towards him, the full-back was content to put the ball into touch with a short and hurried kick.

Play was now inside the Clayshire half, and the crowd was roaring excitedly. Several seasons had passed since Midshire had beaten their powerful opponents.

"This is our chance now!" panted Eric Hughes, the hooker and leader of the Midshire pack. "If we get the ball, whip it back fast."

It was Midshire's throw, and the wing-three-quarter lobbed the ball towards Syd. With opponents springing up round

him, he made the catch, landed, squirmed round, and slung a long pass to Vic White.

The spectators howled as White raced for the Clayshire line. Syd spurred himself into a gallop and followed up.

White corkscrewed round two opponents, but a third crashed him to the ground. The ball squirmed from White's grasp, but Syd snatched it up and went charging for the line.

With his free hand, he handed-off an opponent. However, three other Clayshire players were quickly bearing down on him.

Syd saw the line and hurled himself towards it. A flying fist or an elbow caught him smack in the right eye as he fought his way over the line and dropped on the ball for a try.

Midshire now led by fifteen points to twelve, and their supporters cheered madly.

With a twisted grin on his battered face, Syd brought the ball back. He had scored half-way between the goal and the corner flag.

Two points would be added if the try were converted by kicking the ball between the up-rights.

White looked around and noticed that both his usual place-kickers were limping.

"Will you have a go, Syd?" he asked.

Syd gave a nod. He could not see much out of his right eye, and his left was watering in sympathy, but he brushed his sleeve across it, then used his heel to make a hole in which to set the ball.

Syd placed the ball, backed away from it, took an aiming glance at the goal, then kept his eye on the ball.

He took four paces and kicked. Thud! The touch-judges, who had gone behind the posts, stared up. Suddenly they lifted their flags to signal that the ball had passed between the up-rights.

Syd had converted the try, and this meant that Midshire now led by 17-12.

The game ended with Clayshire attacking desperately.

Just before the whistle went, Syd had the shirt torn off his back as he toppled over the touchline with the ball.

"You played a great game, Syd!" White exclaimed as the teams left the field. "I hope you'll stay for tea. You said something about having to dash away."

"I'll have to be quick about it," replied Syd. "Doctor Booker doesn't like driving his car after dark, so I'm taking him over to Lester."

Dr Booker was the Principal of the University College, and he was going to Lester to attend the TV quiz in which a college team was competing. It was a journey of about thirty miles.

Syd had had his bath and was getting dressed when Dr Thompson, an old rugby player who was now the President of the County Rugby Union, came into the dressing-room. He had come to congratulate the players on their win.

"You're going to have a ripe black eye, Syd," he chuckled. "Is it painful?"

"It's nothing to worry about," answered Syd.

"No, you come over to my surgery and I'll find you some drops that should ease it a lot," advised Dr Thompson.

"It's only just down the road, so you can call in when you've had your tea. I won't keep you hanging about."

"Thanks very much," Syd replied. "I've got a night drive in front of me, and I'd like to be able to see out of both eyes."

FIVE-MILE DASH.

AT about that time Dr Booker, a big, florid man with a dark moustache and an important air, was in his study.

Two students, both well on the way to become "boffins," were with him.

One of the students was Walter Brayne. The other, Hereward Wakeley, had a fluffy beard. He had been

Burglars in an American cafe ate a gallon of ice cream.

selected by the Principal to take the place of the student who had felt sick with stage fright.

At the Lester Town Hall that evening, Brayne and Wakeley were to represent Cramp-hurst University College against Boxleigh College in the second round of the TV knock-out quiz competition.

"I've jotted down a few questions of the kind you may be asked," snapped Dr Booker. "Schoolboys are usually forbidden to smoke, but can you name an occasion when the boys of Eton were encouraged to smoke?"

"Ah, it was during the seventeenth century, when plague was rife," replied Wakeley. "Smoking was believed to be a safeguard against infection."

"Full marks!" boomed the Principal. "Here is a specimen question for you, Brayne. Who was the famous man who was refused admission to his club because he was wearing trousers?"

"Was he the Duke of Wellington?" muttered Brayne. "Correct!" exclaimed Dr Booker. "In the year before the Battle of Waterloo he was refused admission because he wasn't wearing the customary breeches and stockings."

The door opened, and Professor Skelton came in. He had been in an absent-minded mood when he dressed that morning, and was wearing one black shoe and one brown.

"What time do we depart for Lester?" asked the professor.

"I ordered Sutton to be ready with the car at half-past six," answered Dr Booker.

Sergeant Buckle, the elderly Head Porter at the College, was at that moment standing in the lodge doorway, watch in hand. He suffered from rheumatism and corns, and was not an active mover.

The Sergeant saw a bobbing cycle lamp coming along the road, and minutes later Syd pedaled up vigorously after a five-mile ride from Braming-ton. He swung a leg over the saddle and rode the last twenty yards on the pedal.

"Hey, it's twenty-five past six!" grumbled Buckle. "The Principal has rung the lodge twice to find out if you were back."

"Then if he tinkles again you can tell him I'm just going to get the car out," retorted Syd.

The lamp on the archway lit up Syd's face. Buckle peered at his big black eye, which had purple fringes.

"Who hit you?" he asked. "Dunno," grunted Syd. "It was an accident, anyhow. I'll go and fetch the car."

PLOTTING PRODUCER.

AT about twenty to seven Syd drove the car to the door of the Principal's house.

Dr Booker, Professor Skelton, and the two students were waiting for him.

"Sutton, have you been fighting?" demanded Dr Booker.

"Naw, I've been playing rugby!" replied Syd.

"On a Thursday afternoon?" yelped the Principal.

"Yes," answered Syd, "and, at the moment, you owe me a week of my summer holiday that I couldn't take, because the Sergeant was laid up for seven Sundays and thirteen half-days."

"Oh, indeed?" coughed Dr Booker. "Well, let's be on our way."

"Can you see to drive?" whined Professor Skelton. "Are you sure you will not suffer from optical illusions on the road?"

"I shouldn't be driving if it wasn't okay," replied Syd.

Hereward Wakeley sat with Syd, and there was plenty of room for the others in the back.

"Which way are you going, Sutton?" inquired Dr Booker as Syd drove out of the quadrangle.

"Straight along the main road, and then I shall turn right."

"Not so fast, Sutton," snapped Dr Booker.

Syd knew he would have to put up with back-seat driving, and he passed no comment.

"Turn out and pass the lorry," instructed the Principal a few moments later.

"I wasn't intending to run into the back!" muttered Syd.

"By the way," squawked Dr Booker, "did you clean the car this morning?"

"I did," grunted Syd.

"That reminds me," rapped Professor Skelton. "There is a wicked draught in the lecture hall. I had to wear my muffler while I was lecturing this morning to avoid getting rheumatism in the neck muscles."

"I'll see to it," declared Syd, starting to slow down.

"Don't dawdle!" exclaimed Dr Booker.

"You wouldn't like it if I ran into the level crossing gate!" grunted Syd, bringing the car to a halt.

There was a musical honking in the night as a Diesel train rushed over the crossing.

"The train didn't have an engine," the professor exclaimed.

"It was a Diesel," pointed out Syd.

"Ah, that might be a question at the quiz," declared Dr Booker as the car moved over the crossing. "What is the derivation of the word 'Diesel'?"

"It was the name of the inventor, Doctor Rudolf Diesel, an engineer," replied Brayne.

In due course the lights of Lester were seen ahead. The quiz was being held in the Town Hall, and Syd knew exactly where it was.

Soon they pulled up outside the building, with plenty of time in hand. The passengers got out, and Syd, who had a ticket for the quiz, drove off to park the car.

Roland Benson, the producer of the show, and Jim Lucas, the quizmaster, were talking in the main corridor when Syd walked in. Their conversation stopped suddenly when they saw him.

"Here's Syd Sutton!" exclaimed Benson. "He was terrific in the last show!"

"Whew! Look at his shiner!" gasped Jim Lucas. "I'd look terrific on the screen," Benson chuckled. "I'm going to have him in the show!"

"How can you wangle it?" demanded the quizmaster.

"Well, there is a rule that the same teams must appear, though it hasn't been strictly observed," drawled Benson. "I can tell you this, old boy—it's going to be strictly observed tonight!"

CLOSE CONTEST.

DR BOOKER sat scowling in the audience. Professor Skelton kept muttering. "Tut, tut! Outrageous! It's a stupid rule!" and Hereward Wakeley regarded Syd with silent contempt.

Syd was on the platform with Walter Brayne on the Cramp-hurst College side of the quizmaster. On the other side were Arthur Collins and Aubrey Witherspoon, the Boxleigh College representatives.

A red light gleamed, and the quiz was on the air. Jim

(Continued on Page 15.)

are
DOUBLE-WRAPPED
to keep all the flavour in
and all the dirt out

which is your
favourite flavour?
3p

FLAVOURS: FIVE FRUIT FLAVOURS, OLD ENGLISH ASSORTMENT, PEPPERMINT, LIME, BLACKCURRANT, ACID DROP, CANDY MINT, BARLEY SUGAR.

An enemy uses ordinary letters in a bid to make Jack lose the mail-carrying contract!

OLD COACHES NEVER DIE!



HIGH SPEED REPAIRS.

FROM the driving seat of a stagecoach young Jack Dalgay gazed down at a grim scene.

Custer, one of the lead horses, was lying on its side, struggling to free itself from a tangle of traces.

The other two horses were in a state of panic, but Jack kept them under control with a firm grip on the reins.

The fourth member of the team had been a mule named Murphy, which had taken fright when a bobcat had run across the trail. Breaking free from the traces, the mule had fled, leaving Jack with a grim problem.

He had recently inherited the Daley Stagecoach Line on the death of his Uncle Abe. On arriving at Saginaw City, Colorado, he found that his inheritance consisted of one ramshackle coach, several third-rate horses, and the doubtful assistance of a hostler named Heb Horne.

The Daley Line held the mail-carrying contract for the route from Saginaw to Sagebrush—a big mining centre which was thirty miles away.

To fulfil his contract, Jack had to do the run in five hours, and on this, his first trip, he was determined to make sure the mail got through on time. But, thanks to the bobcat disaster, his first trip looked like being his last.

Heb Horne, who had so many whiskers that his nose looked like a brown egg in a nest, grabbed hold of the hand-rail as the coach swayed.

"Dang that Murphy! He's skeered of bobcats," he croaked. "They're jest the one thing he kaint stand!"

You couldn't warn me before!" snapped Jack. "Git hold of the lines!"

He sprang down and sat on Custer's head to prevent him from struggling and entangling himself in the harness.

One of the coach's passengers, Mr Jacob Roscoe, had recovered from the shock of thinking the coach was going to capsizes, and he assumed an air of smug satisfaction.

As a Post Office inspector, he had put in a report to his superiors that the mail service on the Saginaw City-Sagebrush route was erratic and unsatisfactory. They had sent him out to time the run.

If Jack were a minute late at the end of the trail Roscoe could deprive him of the contract. Usually a minute late here or there was overlooked, but Roscoe intended to insist on the letter of the law being obeyed.

His motive was to have the contract transferred to a rival coach line owned by Tex Madison.

Roscoe considered that Madison's green coaches were far more reliable than the Daley Line. So far as appearances went he was probably right.

Now Jack's training as a driver with the Blue Star Line, one of the best in the West, stood him in good stead. The younger had not been awarded the Silver Whip of merit for nothing. He got Custer up, then worked like a fury to patch

things up. He detached the fractured swing-pole and replaced it with the spare carried on the back of the coach. This had been spliced, and he hoped it would hold.

With a thick piece of wire from the toolbox, he mended a trace, boring holes through the leather to take the wire. He worked expertly and he worked fast, helped by Heb Horne—after the horses had calmed down.

Heb claimed that he was "a mighty ornery cuss, an dangerous to rile." Jack doubted if he were as dangerous as he said, but he gave Jack a considerable amount of help in straightening things out. Maybe he had had plenty of practice.

"Okay, let's go!" rapped Jack.

"You ain't gwine to climb Jacob's Ladder wid three horses," growled Heb. "You ain't seen that hill as yet! Jest ain't possible to sit up it wid three horses—"

"We'll set up it if we have to set down an' push!" Jack retorted.

Determination blazed on Jack's brown, cocky face. The horses were running well.

They were certainly a queer-looking lot, but they had not been kept short of rations. At Coyote Creek, one of the line's staging-posts, the horses were supposed to be looked after by a man of the name of Lev Sperrin, but his main job was going out hunting to provide meat for the mining camps. Thus the task of hostler had fallen on his son, Dinger.

SAVED BY DINGER.

FAR away in the distance was a receding cloud of dust. It was made by the green stagecoach driven by Black Young.

All the seats had been taken. The most important passenger was Garland Hisbee, President of the Colorado and Western Bank.

The ground dipped and rose in a series of undulations. Jack went racing down the dips and used the speed to keep going

on the rises. The trail snaked round a bend, and when Jack stared at the trail ahead he soon saw that Jacob's Ladder was well named.

Instead of ascending a steep ridge in zigzags, the trail went straight up. The hill was one reason why the railway had not been extended beyond Saginaw City. The grade varied from one in ten to one in six.

Jack eased the horses down on the approach, then he heard the thudding hoof.

He shot a glance back and gave an ear-splitting yell of—"Yippee, Dinger!"

There was an answering yell from Dinger as he came barging up on Murphy, his bare legs sticking from the bottoms of his tattered trouser legs. He looked smaller than ever on the back of the big mule. His tousled hair was curly, and he was smothered in freckles. Dinger gave Jack a somewhat scornful look.

"Wot did you wanna let him go for?" he scoffed.

"A bobcat threw a scare into him," Jack answered as he sprang down. "Thanks for bringing him back."

Dinger could have swallowed him, but backed towards the coach as the lad gave him a slap and a shove.

Roscoe took another look at his watch, and his face creased in another smug smile as Jack and Dinger took time in hitching up the mule.

"Okay," Jack said, and gathered the lines in his left hand. "We're on the way!"

He used the wheel hub as a step and nipped on to the box, followed by Dinger.

With Murphy's weight on his collar, the long hard pull started. Thanks to the powerful aid of Murphy, the coach kept moving.

Jack was very anxious to reach Sagebrush on time and retain the mail contract. It paid well. He had his look at his uncle's cash book, and realised that, so long as he had it, he could just about meet expenses.

A touch from the whip reminded Custer that he was there to pull. The steepest part of the hill was like climbing the roof of a house. But Murphy whacked his great hoofs down and tugged away as if he were an engine.

As the coach came over the top, a tremendous panorama spread out before Jack's gaze.

Men shaved as early as 3400 B.C.

Sagebrush lay in the heart of a wide valley, and on the other side soared the peaks of the Sangre de Cortes Mountains. The trail descended to the valley in three huge zigzags. Jack gave Murphy and the horses a short breather, then put them into a run.

Dinger watched intently as Jack swung team and coach round a curve. The grin spread across his freckled face. "Let 'em go!" he chirped. "Don't let 'em go too fast!"

Heb muttered as the coach lurched in the ruts.

Jack snatched a downward glance, and Sagebrush looked remote and far away. He gazed ahead, and his keen eyes detected the outline of a track which left the trail at right angles and went straight down the slope.

"Hey, Dinger, is that a possible shortcut?" he asked. Dinger peered up at him in surprise, then gave a nod.

"The muleskinners cut a couple miles off by gwine down the hill," he replied.

Jack called out to ask the time.

"It only wants twenty minutes to five o'clock," responded Roscoe. "We would need wings to keep the schedule!"

SHOCK APPEARANCE.

JACK'S eyes flashed with determination.

"We'll get that on time or bust!" he shouted as he completed the turn off the trail and started down the steep descent.

"Stop it!" roared Roscoe. "Have you gone mad?"

Jack gave a yank at the handbrake. He kept the lines taut to help the horses, but left Murphy to manage on his own.

Down the slope on locked wheels slithered the coach.

The ornery hombre who was dangerous to rile crawled to the back of the coach, scrambled down, and jumped off. Dinger bobbed up and down excitedly.

Jack concentrated all his driving skill on keeping the horses upright as they lay back against their collars, and on preventing the coach from overrunning the trail.

He could hold the horses. His anxiety was that the coach would not stand the buffeting. It came skidding round a sharp bend with dirt and stones breaking away under the offside wheels and shooting away in miniature avalanches.

The inside wheels passed over a rock and the coach gave an awful thump as it dropped. Thorn bushes raked the sides.

Raising a mighty cloud of dust, the mule and horses scrambled down the slope. The coach slowed sideways.

"We're going!" bellowed Roscoe.

Jack let the brake off, and, as the rear wheels turned, the coach came out of the skid. He yanked it hard on again for a twist in the track. A

dislodged stone as big as a football skipped ahead.

Custer staggered. Jack gave him his head, and the horse, left to himself, regained his balance.

Bumping and screeching, the coach passed through a grove of spruce. The jagged top of a tree stump caught a wheel and fetched out a spoke. Jack swung the team round a massive boulder, and fifty feet below saw the trail go twisting away towards the town.

Roscoe flung an arm over his eyes as the team ran down the slope. There was a last terrific lurch, and the wheels were on the trail.

Behind six sturdy horses, the green coach came steadily down the grade. On reaching the level, Black Young, who took his name from his whiskers, whipped up the team for a fast run into the town.

Gid Crabtree, the guard, drew out his big watch.

"We've done record time today, gents," he boomed at the passengers. "I hope the trip's bin to yore satisfaction, Colonel?"

He addressed Garland Bisbee with his former military title. Years ago, in the days of the Civil War, the banker had commanded a cavalry regiment. An injury had left him with a limp.

"Yes, you have come along well," replied Bisbee, who had a neat beard and wore a beaver hat.

Black Young turned into the straight stretch towards the town.

The wide main street lay ahead. It was Bisbee who pointed to a vehicle standing outside the post and telegraph office.

"Isn't that the Daley coach?" he inquired.

Black Young nearly fell off the box, and Crabtree's eyes bulged out at the sight of Jack passing the two mailbags down to Evan Jones, the postmaster.

The clock on the town hall pointed to five minutes to five. Roscoe stood by the side of the coach, mopping his face.

"What's been holding you back?" Jack shouted.

"Trouble, or slow horses?"

Black Young couldn't think up a retort on the spur of the moment, and seemed to have something stuck in his gullet as he drove on towards the Gold Nugget Hotel, where the green coaches ended their journeys.

Jack took a receipt for the bags from Evan Jones.

"Can I keep you a seat for the return trip tomorrow, Mister Roscoe?" Jack asked.

"No," Roscoe replied thickly. "I shan't be riding back with you, but your trip will be time for me, I hope."

Jack grinned.

"Our motto is—always ahead of the clock!" he chirped.

He gave the lines a shake. "Where are our stables, Dinger?"

"Dunno," said Dinger. "I ain't bin here before. I know

thar ain't a hostler."

Jones pointed up the street at a sagging fence and a gateway without a gate.

"That is your place," he explained. "The roof of the stables blew off on Tuesday, yess, so it did, indeed to goodness!"

Jack gave the lines a shake, and Murphy and the horses jogged up the street and through the gateway into the yard, just as they stopped, there was a heavy jolt.

"Now what's fallen off?" he growled.

"One of the back wheels," said Dinger.

"What comes off will go on!" exclaimed Jack. "We'll give the team a drink an' a feed. They've earned it."

While Dinger was un-harnessing the team, Jack had a quick look around. By the gateway was a shack containing a small office and a living-room with a couple of bunks and a stove.

Next to it was a shanty for use as a harness room. Down the yard was the stabling, a long shed with warped board walls.

As Jones had stated, most of the corrugated iron sheets had been blown off the roof. The hay store contained plenty of hay, but there was only half a sack of oats.

"I'll have to set up a hostler here as soon as I can raise the wages," muttered Jack. The team had been fed, watered, and rubbed down, and Jack had the stove going to cook some bacon and beans when Heb Horne trudged into the yard with his pistol holsters rubbing against his thighs.

"Where've you been hiding?" chuckled Jack.

"I ain't been hidin', I've bin walkin'," growled Heb.

"He jumped off!" jeered Dinger.

Heb gave him a baleful look.

"My idea was to stand on the brake beam, but I missed my footin'," he said. "You should've stopped for me."

LETTER TRICK.

IN the morning Jack went across to the post office, where Evan Jones, a man of fifty or thereabouts, sat on a stool behind a short counter.

At the back of the room was a ledge on which the sounders of the telegraph instruments were clicking away.

Jack knew that he had to be in Sigmund Crag by half-past six that evening to catch the train.

"What time will the bags be ready?" he asked.

"I receive letters up till noon," replied Jones. "The bags will be ready as soon as I have sealed them up, man."

"Okay, that's fine," replied Jack.

He left the office. Across the street were the premises of the Madison coaches. The office and fence had recently had a fresh coat of paint.

A brawny hostler and helper led out a string of horses for exercise. Jack regarded them longingly. They were up to Blue Star standard.

On a board outside the office was chalked—"Today's Express Schedule: Depart 12 Noon Prompt! Fare—Five Dollars."

Jack hurried back to his premises and found a tin of white paint and a brush. He went outside and painted on the wall—

DALEY'S COACH

"ALWAYS AHEAD OF THE CLOCK!"

TRAVEL AS FAST AS UNCLE SAM'S MAILS:

FARE—FIVE DOLLARS:

A few minutes before twelve, Black Young, driving a spanking team of six greys, wheeled the green coach out of the stableyard and drew up outside the hotel. A throng of passengers waited to get on.

Soon afterwards, Jack brought out his coach behind Murphy and the three nags and waited outside the post office. There were no signs of any passengers for him.

Black Young winked at his guard.

"Did you fix about them letters?" he whispered.

Crabtree nodded.

"Yeah," the rusted chuckled. "Several buddies of mine with letters to post will be turnin' up at the last minute."

By five minutes to twelve every seat, inside and out, had been taken on the green coach.

"How about giving me the mailbags?" Jack called out to Postmaster Jones, who was standing in the doorway.

"Indeed, I might as well!" exclaimed Jones. "No, I cannot! Here iss Hake Johnson with a letter."

Hake Johnson, who kept a store, ambled along as if the day after tomorrow would do, and behind him sauntered two or three other citizens carrying letters.

The a horseman rode down the street. Garland Bisbee, his dark coat powdered with dust, was astride a horse he had hired from Ben Grice's livery stable.

Grice was one of the men who had belatedly arrived with a letter for the post.

"Didn't expect you back yet, Colonel," he greeted.

"I've seen all I wished to see," answered Bisbee harshly.

"Help me down!"

Grice supported him as he got down the stable.

The Colonel tried to straighten his right leg and winced with pain, for he suffered from the effects of a war wound.

His thick walking-stick was tied to the saddle, and he looked to the wall. The letter was handed to him by Grice.

Then he limped towards the post office building.

"I have an urgent telegram to send, Jones," he said.

"I will send it away at once, Colonel," answered Jones.

"Hey, what about the mails?" Jack asked.

"There is more urgency for the telegram, yes, indeed," hissed Jones, and went into the office, followed by the Colonel.

Jack tried not to show his impatience, for Black Young and Crabtree were staring across with smirks on their faces.

"The grass'll be growing round his wheels before he gets a start," chortled Crabtree. "Okay, Black! It's twelve o'clock! Away on the lot, that's us!"

Black Young's whip cracked. The greys came up to their collars, and the green coach got on the move.

Jack suddenly received a surprise. Dinger shot off the back sidewalk, ran along behind the departing coach, and nipped up on to the baggage rack. He climbed on to the luggage and sat on a box.

Black Young had a stowaway and did not know it. Heb Horne blinked as he watched Dinger riding out of town.

"What's his idea?" he rumbled.

"He's going to make sure our horses are ready when we get to Coyote Creek," chuckled Jack.

From his perch on the box, Jack could see through the post office window. The mailbags still lay open on the counter. Jones was at the back of the room, tapping at

the key of the telegraph instrument, watched by Bisbee.

"Ow much longer are we gwin' to be stuck here?" growled Heb. "The train won't wait for us at Saginaw, an' if we miss it the mail contract'll go bang."

"I think he's finished sending the telegram!" exclaimed Jack as Jones sprang up from his chair.

He spoke agitatedly to Bisbee, who came limping hurriedly out of the post office with Jones at his heels.

"I'm coming with you!" Bisbee shouted at Jack. "The telegraph line has gone dead. In my opinion, it's been cut to prevent me sending an urgent message through to my bank!"

"Don't keep him waiting!" the banker snarled at Jones. "I'd ride to the next telegraph office, at Saginaw, but my leg wouldn't stand it."

Heb Horne had brought the ladder over in case there were any passengers, and Bisbee climbed awkwardly and painfully to the roof.

Jones dashed out with the two mailbags which he had hastily sealed and Heb stuffed them into the compartment under the driving-seat.

MORE TROUBLE.

THE Silver Whip cracked like a pistol, and Murphy gave a tremendous tug.



SYD THE QUIZ KID

(Continued from Page 12.)

Lucas quickly introduced the programme, then the camera focused on the contestants.

"Allister Sutton, of course, is an all-round sportsman, and he received his lovely black eye when he scored the winning try for Midshire this afternoon," Lucas smiled. "Now, to borrow a metaphor from another sport, he is going to be the first to face the bowling."

"Make it an easy one," chortled Syd.

"Does any animal have a name which begins with 'X'?" the quizmaster asked Syd.

"No," growled Syd.

"Correct!" agreed Lucas. "There's no such animal, but there are two whose names start with 'Z'. Can you name them?"

"Zebra," mumbled Brayne, then there was silence.

"I'll have to throw it open," announced the quizmaster. "Ah, Syd Sutton's light is on!"

"I reckon it's a zebu," Syd chirped. "It's a kind of

Indian cow with a hump."

"Correct!" grinned Lucas. "You've saved a mark for your side."

Syd winked at the camera. He had recently seen a picture of a zebu on the cover of a boys' paper that his young nephew had left about.

The Boxleigh pair were equal to their questions, and the situation became tense and exciting.

Syd was helped along by the fact that he had a very good memory.

The quizmaster looked at Arthur Collins.

"Here is a quotation from the poet Henry," he announced. "It is, 'A deal of Ariel, just a streak of Puck.' What game might that describe?"

Collins shook his head. Syd stuck his thumb on the press-button that worked his light in the panel in front of the quizmaster.

"Ice hockey," Syd declared.

"It's played with a puck," said Lucas.

"Correct!" smiled Lucas. "Have you ever played ice hockey?"

Syd opened his mouth and pointed to a gap in his front teeth.

"A puck did that," he explained.

Dr Booker shuddered, but it was a bonus mark to Cramp-hurst, and at the interval they led by thirteen points to twelve.

Bisbee drew his gold watch out of his fob. He was racing to stop a fraud. Application had been made to his bank for a loan of five thousand dollars to buy crushers for a new gold-mine near Sagebrush.

Everything appeared to be in order, but, as he was in the district, he had decided to have a look at the site. There he had obtained evidence that the mine had been "salted," and would never be able to produce gold.

Unless he could get a "stop" message through, the cash would be paid over to Luke Leathers, the man who had negotiated the loan, before the end of the day.

Jack drove fast along the level trail. The telegraph wires shimmered in the sunlight at the side of the track.

The ridge lay ahead, and, as Jack looked up, he saw the other coach and horses silhouetted for a moment against the skyline.

The trail became steep. Murphy and the horses settled down to their hard collar-work. It was a long haul to the summit, then they were faced by the equally slow descent of Jacob's Ladder.

Jack had found a skidpan at the stables, and Heb scrambled down to drop it under one of the back wheels to act as a brake.

Bisbee realised the need for caution, but as soon as they

reached the bottom of the hill he told Jack to hurry.

Dust rose in clouds from under the pounding hoofs of Murphy and Slate, Hardrock, and Guster. Bisbee and Heb were off their seats as much as on them.

Jack, his gaze on the trail, suddenly got a blast from Bisbee in his ear.

"Look—it was sabotage!" roared the Colonel, pointing to the side of the trail. "The wire's been cut! That's why I couldn't send the telegram. Luke Leathers is a doggone scoundrel! It beats me how we ever trusted him!"

Jack snatched a quick glance and saw that there was a long gap in one of the telegraph wires. The coach lurched, and from underneath came a splintering crash. The wheels wobbled. Jack shortened the lines, and there was a careful look on his face as he brought the team to a stop.

"What's the matter?" rasped Bisbee wildly.

"Wheels ain't come off," spluttered Heb.

Jack wrapped the lines round the rail and sprang to the ground. He looked under the coach and found his guess was correct.

"The back axle's gone!" he exclaimed.

Next week, Jack Daley borrows some telegraph wire to make sure his coach runs on time!

MEDICAL BAFFLER.

THE sides still waged a close battle when the quiz was resumed. Once again spat crapped up.

Lucas questioned Brayne.

"In which sport would you be engaged if you were spinning?" he asked.

"Er—spinning a top," spluttered Brayne.

"I would hardly call it a sport," laughed the quizmaster. "I shall have to throw it open."

"Fishing!" rapped Syd, and saved the situation for his side.

Two rounds later Boxleigh caught up and made the score 20-20 when Aubrey Witherspoon gained a bonus mark for his team.

Syd's turn came round.

"Where does the word 'Diesel' come from?" asked Lucas solemnly.

"Doctor Rudolf Diesel was the inventor," grunted Syd.

Aubrey Witherspoon's turn came round.

"The phonetic alphabet as employed by signallers and in air jargon has been changed from time to time," explained Lucas. "Can you tell me the first six words of the phonetic alphabet now adopted for world-wide use?"

Witherspoon looked blank. So did his partner and Brayne.

"Ah, I see Syd Sutton's

light is on," announced the quizmaster.

"Here we go!" chirped Syd. "Alfa, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, Foxtrot, Golf, Hotel, India—"

"Whoa—I only asked for six!" chuckled Lucas. "A bonus mark to you—and your turn. What is acetyl-salicylic acid?"

"That's bowled him out!" cackled Professor Skelton.

Syd gave a laugh.

"The answer's aspirin," he stated.

"Correct!" gasped the quizmaster, and the audience's applause was loud and long.

Brayne and the others knew the answers, and so the quiz ended in a victory for Cramp-hurst by twenty-five points to twenty-three.

Dr Booker congratulated his team gruffly. He was glad they had won, but was a bit peeved at Syd's success.

"I was surprised you knew the answer relating to acetyl-salicylic acid," he said.

"I had a bit of luck there," Syd chuckled. "I went along to Doctor Thompson's surgery to have my eye bathed, and it was on the label of one of the bottles. He told me it was only aspirin."

—*—

Syd Sutton causes a sensation next Tuesday—by appearing on the quiz programme in full boxing rig-out!



LANKY'S SPOT for SPORTS



Most of you will have heard of a "glass jaw." A boxer who is easy to knock out with a punch to the chin is often given this nickname. Right now, I want to tell you about a boxer who had a silver jaw—and he was far from being easy to knock out!

THE SILVER-JAWED SLUGGER

EUGENE CRIQUI had been a very successful feather-weight boxer before the First World War, and he knew no other way of earning his living.

Now, with a silver plate in his chin to patch up a bone fractured by a German bullet, Eugene did not know what to do with himself. The war was over and France was settling down to a peaceful way of living again.

The young Frenchman wandered around the gymnasiums watching fighters training and sparring in the ring. He longed to put the gloves on again, but he did not dare risk his wounded jaw in the ring. One punch could quite easily put him back in hospital to suffer weeks of pain.

One day an American boxer was using a gym for training. Apart from the American and his trainer, the gym was empty. The American wanted a few rounds of sparring practice and asked Eugene if he would put on the gloves.

The temptation was too strong for the young Frenchman, and he was soon in the ring, stripped for action. As the bell went for the first round, Eugene felt the old skill coming back. Although it was years now since he had been in a ring, he found that he could still box like a champion.

Another thing which amazed him was the force with which he could punch. Every training had strengthened him, and his right-hand punches were knock-outs.

The American boxer had wanted a work-out, but he had to save himself from ending up flat on his back! When the bout was over, the American slapped Eugene on the back and told him to find himself a manager. "You'd go far in the fight game, bud," he finished.

While he was changing back into his clothes, Eugene suddenly remembered his jaw. Fearfully he examined it, ex-

pecting to feel a twinge of pain which would mean that the bone had fractured again. But his chin was as solid as a rock.

At once, Eugene went to the man who had managed him before the war and fixed up a fight. Then began a series of fights in which Eugene proved that his silver jaw was worth its weight in gold! Punch after punch landed on his chin, but the Frenchman scarcely felt the blows.

Criqui's most sensational fight took place at Holburn Stadium, London, on the 18th of September, 1919. His opponent was Walter Ross, a



young Scot who had just won a Lonsdale Belt, and who was out to win more honours.

In the fourteenth round, Criqui put his opponent down with a knock-out right-hand punch.

After Ross had been counted out, however, it was found that he had been "saved by the bell," which had not rung. The fifteenth round was started, with Ross's seconds still in the ring. Eugene knocked out his opponent, who was still groggy, while the Scot's seconds crowded round him in protest!

Eugene Criqui's greatest triumph came in 1923, when he knocked out Johnny Kelbane, in New York, to become feather-weight champion of the world.

MY HERO

Captain of Wolves and England, Billy Wright was born in Ironbridge and joined Wolves' ground staff as a boy of fourteen. He played in his first international match in 1946, and now holds the record as the player who has won most international caps. Billy has 99 international caps to his credit—an amazing number. Other honours which he has won include a cup winner's medal, a championship medal, and he was awarded the title of "Footballer of the Year" in the 1951-52 season.

Silverford, Banbridge, Co. Down, N. Ireland, is the address on the package that I've just put in this week's post-bag. The package contains a tip-top SPORTS WATCH, my prize to Kenneth

Hero" for his first-class "My Hero" report. YOU can win a SPORTS WATCH prize, too! Write out an account of your favourite sporting personality, ask your teacher to sign your letter, and send it to the address at the foot of the page. If your report is published, you win a prize!



FOOTBALL FLASHES

Ian St. John, of Motherwell, had a great come-back after being out of football with an injury for six weeks. Only 48 hours after having the plaster taken off a broken wrist, Ian played in a Scottish Cup tie against Airdrie and scored a grand total of five goals. The result of the match was a 7-2 win for Motherwell.

Some interesting figures can be found by looking in the record books. For instance, do the following facts prove that Dumfries is the most football-minded town in Britain? Record attendance at Palmerston Park (Queen of the South's ground), 25,000; population of Dumfries (home of Queen of the South), 26,000.

Albert Quixall, of Manchester United, can walk with a football balanced on his head, and Dave Burnside, of West Bromwich Albion, can walk with one balanced on his shoulder. Now what would happen if one of these players adopted this unusual tactic during a match? Of course, this is most unlikely, but pity the poor referee who would have to make a decision in a case like that.

Graham Williams, who plays for Swansea Town, is a Welshman born in Swansea. There's nothing unusual about a Welshman playing for a Welsh club, but the point is, Graham took rather a roundabout route. Before he signed for Swansea, he played first for Bradford City, then Everton.

Sporty HINTS



Before using o swimming mask, rub the inside of the mask with a piece of cut potato. This prevents the mask from steaming up.



After swimming, dry your flippers thoroughly, then apply french chalk. This will preserve the rubber, and keep the flippers pliable.

IT'S A FACT!

Although the distance between Dover and Calais is only 18 miles, tides often make it necessary for Channel swimmers TO SWIM 40 MILES!

During a hockey match on a muddy field at Southampton, the ball was trodden into the ground AND WAS LOST!

Boxing gloves were introduced in the 18th century and WERE CALLED "MUFFLERS!"

When Patsy Handren played his last match in first class county cricket HE SCORED A CENTURY!

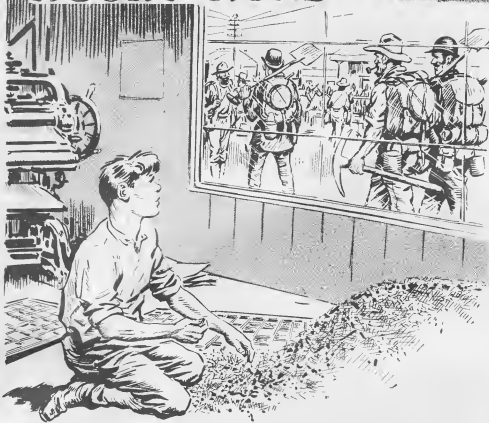
At Wimbledon in 1937, Donald Budge was on the winning side in the men's doubles and mixed doubles, and HE WON THE MEN'S SINGLES!

One day when it was raining, C. Oserwith of Aston Villa played CARRY-ING AN UMBRELLA!

Dick's fingers are sorting out mixed-up type, but his feet are itching to take the road to the gold-fields!

The ROCKY ROAD TO NOWHERE

GOLD FEVER.



DIFFICULT TASK.

UP from the Melbourne wharves came Paddy Burke's heavy lorry, drawn by four horses stumbling and straining over the rough roads.

It was early in the year 1851, and business was almost at a standstill in the Victorian capital. Trade had been dull there for a long time, and many of the more adventurous types had left Australia for the gold-fields in California.

Now, gold had been discovered in New South Wales, 700 miles away from Melbourne, and people were stampeding there.

There was very little money in Melbourne, and shopkeepers stood at their doors for lack of customers. That meant there were plenty of people to watch the progress of the lorry as it crashed into potholes and narrowly avoided the stumps of trees that nearly blocked every street.

The packing cases on the lorry had seemingly been roughly handled, for they were patched with planks nailed on here and there, and tied up with ropes.

The lorry pulled into a narrow lane off King Street, and stopped at the door of "Newton & Smithers, Printers." The driver thumped on it with the butt of his whip.

Out came Smithers, with, behind him, young Dick Hardy, a new arrival from England. "By 'Jingo!' we'll be Smithers in delight. "It's our type at last."

"Sure it is," Paddy growled. "Which are you, Newton or Smithers?"

"Newton got sick of waiting. He's gone to New South Wales."

"I'll be off there myself if things don't improve," the driver muttered. "This is the first job I've had for a week, so it's lucky the Thespis got into port last night."

"They've been badly knocked about," Smithers declared, looking critically at the cases.

"It's lucky you are to get them at all," was the answer. "The Thespis struck bad weather all the way out."

Dick Hardy was sent to collect half a dozen loafers to help unload the type. It did not take him long to find the men, and the type crates were soon unloaded. Smithers paid off the gang and settled up with Paddy, then stood looking at the cases and rubbing his hands with satisfaction.

"Newton will be sorry he went off to the goldfields now," Smithers chuckled. "But let's forget about him just now, and open these cases and see what's in them. They've certainly been bashed about."

The cases had been handled so roughly that they took very little opening. As the first one fell apart, Smithers gave a gasp

of dismay.

The case was full of type, there was no doubt about that, but the little packets in which it had been wrapped had all burst on the voyage, and the letters were all mixed up!

"Great Scott!" groaned Smithers, looking at the mess. "Let's have a look at the others."

Dick set to with a hammer and chisel, but one by one, the other cases proved to be in no better shape than the first.

Capital letters, small letters, punctuation marks—all these had burst out of their separate packages and were jumbled together in a total confusion.

"All pied!" cried Smithers, almost tearing his hair. "What a mess!"

"Pied type" is a printer's term for type which, by accident or carelessness, has become mixed up. When this lot of type had been sent out by the manufacturers in England, it had all been neatly parcelled, each letter in a different package, ready to be put into the compartments or "cases" used by the printer.

Thanks to the weather the ship had gone through on the way out and the battering the cases had taken going in and out of the hold, the type was nothing but a great heap of thousands of pieces of metal of various sizes. It was useless until it was all sorted out and each piece of type put in its proper compartment in the

"I WISH Newton hadn't gone to New South Wales," complained Smithers. "He knew more about this than I do."

"We'll finish it eventually," Dick declared, although the sight of the vast mound was not very encouraging.

"Eventually is a heck of a long way off!" growled Smithers unhappily, "but we'll have to make a start."

Smithers and Dick faced a heap of pied type about four feet high. Each piece of it had to be picked up, held to the light, examined, then put in the right compartment of the case.

At the end of the day the pile looked just as large as it had done when they started, and they were heartily sick of the job.

Dick worked grimly on. It was very boring, but he had a bulldog nature, so that once he tackled a thing, he would not let up. His determination had brought him to Australia in the first place.

He had come to Melbourne in search of his elder brother, Bob, who had left for Australia five years before in one of the early emigrant ships, and had disappeared.

A less steadfast lad would soon have given up all hope of finding his brother, but Dick simply refused to believe that Bob was dead. He was sure that he would track Bob down sooner or later. In the meantime he had to work, in order to eat.

For Dick, sorting the type was merely an unpleasant and monotonous task which would be finished in time. The harder he struck to it, the sooner it would be over, and they could get on with something more interesting.

Smithers, however, although the boss, had a very different outlook. He fumed and fretted all the time, and every couple of hours would jump up and declare that he would not go for a stroll downtown "till the latest news, he would go out of his mind. After three days' work, Dick began to think his boss would.

"I can't sleep at night for thinking of this darned stuff," Smithers said. "Every time I close my eyes I see a great heap of m's and n's, and the more I sort out, the bigger the heap gets. I only wish I'd gone to New South Wales with Newton now!"

Dick cried out, jamming on his hat, Smithers stamped out of the office. He was a real good fellow, but Dick did not think he would ever make a fortune as a printer, or in any other kind of business.

Dick went on methodically picking up type, looking at it and dropping it into its proper

Testing bubble gum is the job of an American.

place until late in the afternoon. Then he slipped out to buy food for the evening meal. He did not have to go far, for Dick around the corner was a butcher's shop.

It was kept by an ex-soldier who had been hit on the head in the Kaffir War in South Africa. He was as deaf as a post because of his wound, so Dick wrote out what meat he wanted and handed the list to him.

The other provisions, Dick bought at a store kept by Mr Martin, a very old and very bright lady who took little interest in what went on provided she got paid for her goods.

Dick bought a couple of days' supply of everything and went back to his monotonous job. Smithers was not home by that time, but as that was unusual, Dick left him something to eat and went to bed.

When Smithers went into the centre of town that afternoon, he found the place more than usually excited. Many shops were shut, and their owners and employees had joined the groups standing in the streets discussing the placards which had appeared like magic on walls, fences, and trees.

Notice Extraordinary!
Gold found in Victoria.
This afternoon the Lieutenant Governor of Victoria, Mr C. J. Larrobe, announced that the long awaited, eagerly expected discovery of gold has actually taken place. It is reported from the Clunes district that Mr Harry Esmond and party have already unearthed half a dozen large nuggets which are now on their way to Melbourne under armed guard.

Smithers read this far when his attention was caught by the sound of cheering farther along the street. There were shouts of "The nuggets! Gold! Gold! The nuggets are here!"

There was a stampede in the direction of the shouts. Smithers joined in the excited mob.

Forcing its way down the middle of the road was a dusty coach drawn by six jaded horses. Beside the driver sat a man in a red shirt holding a musket, while several police troopers provided an escort. "Make way there!" they shouted.

The coach pulled up outside a jeweller's shop. The troopers held back the crowd, who shouted—"Show us the gold! Where is it?"

Smithers shoved through the throng, and saw the troopers carrying a box into the jeweller's shop, which had barred windows. More police appeared and stood on guard.

Lights were placed in one window, and in a few moments a man ranged the nuggets in a row on a strip of black velvet. A moment later he put a hastily-written placard behind them.

"Nuggets of fine gold found at Clunes by Harry

Esmond. Total weight, 224 ounces." The crowd, then broke into a cheer. Those small glittering, yellow lumps of metal, all dug up in one day, were worth nearly a thousand pounds!

"Who's for Clunes?" yelled a big, bearded man named Dermott, jumping on to a box. "Who'll make up a load? Come on, boys, I'm starting right now. Who'll join my party?" He caught sight of Smithers. "You there, Smithers—are you on?"

Smithers hesitated. Clunes was only 70 miles away. Certainly the country was rugged, but they could be there in two days at latest.

"I'm with you, Dermott," he hollered, "but give me an hour."

"Don't be a fool," roared Dermott. "I'm all ready. I've been waiting for this. Now or never!"

"What about an outfit?" demanded Smithers.

"That can come later," Dermott told him, already with several takers. "Get yourself a shovel. We can pick up what else we want on the way out of town."

Smithers hesitated no longer. It was first come, first served, on a gold field.

"I'm with you," Smithers yelled excitedly. Taking out his pocket book he tore out a leaf and wrote on it—

"Dear Dick,—I'm off to Clunes to peg out what I claim. I'll be back in a few

days. Just stick to the job until I see you again. There's some money in the drawer of the desk."

Smithers signed the note, gave a lad a couple of shillings to run round with it to the printers' office, then set off with Dermott and his hastily-collected party. The greatest gold rush in history had begun!

BORING JOB.

NEXT morning, Dick rose and found the note under the door. Having read it, he doggedly attacked the vast heap of type that still remained.

He worked undisturbed all day, for nobody came near the place, then stuck at his task until late at night, wondering whether he could possibly have it finished by the time Smithers returned.

Next day he was at it again. By now he was becoming used to the endless job, and could work faster.

The following day there was still a large mound to be dealt with.

In the afternoon Dick took some money from the drawer Smithers had mentioned and went round to buy food.

Usually at that time of the day the butcher's shop was filled with customers, but today the deaf man had the place to himself. When Dick appeared and pointed to some mutton chops the butcher looked at him in surprise.

"You still here?" he asked. "Why shouldn't I be?" asked Dick, but the unfortunate ex-soldier could not hear a word he said.

"You're only the third customer I've had today!" the butcher went on, hacking off a couple of chops.

Dick went back to his job again. Two days later the pile of type was really lower, but there was still no sign of Smithers.

He expected his boss back the next day, but he did not come. By nightfall, the pile of type was still smaller, but there was a lot of it still left.

Feeling that he never wanted to see another bit of type again in his life, Dick went round to the butcher's for some more meat, but to his surprise his shop was shut. On the door was pinned a notice—

"Come to Clunes—Closed" until further notice.

Dick went round to the store and asked the old lady about it.

"I hear a lot of men are leaving," she said. "Ridiculous nonsense. I call it. They'd sooner look for gold than do honest work, in my opinion."

Thinking that he would just as soon look for gold as do the sort of work he was doing, Dick bought his supplies, then went back to his office. The pile of type was still there, but Smithers was not.

Smithers had almost forgotten that such a thing as a printing office existed. At that moment, stripped to the waist, he was wielding a pick on the bank of a creek near Clunes. All around him were men working like beavers.

As soon as they dug enough gravel to half-fill a tin dish, they topped it up with water from the creek, and sluiced it about, allowing the water and the fine grains of gravel to run out over the edge.

By this means they got rid of the gravel until nothing remained at the bottom of the dish but the heavier pieces and a few glittering grains of gold.

Sometimes one of the miners would find a nugget, whereupon there would be a yell of triumph and those nearest would down tools to look at his find.

Some of the diggers slept under the drays and wagons which had brought them there, but newcomers were arriving all the time, bringing tents and other equipment. Grippled by the gold fever, every man worked like a demon, hardly stopping to eat or sleep.

Some diggers, who scarcely had a penny to their names when they arrived, were already worth hundreds of pounds.

TO THE GOLDFIELDS.

DICK HARDY threw the last piece of type into its place. Finished, he thought, with relief.

(Continued on Page 22.)

NAT LOFTHOUSE TELLS YOU

"Ask for the
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FOOTBALL!**"

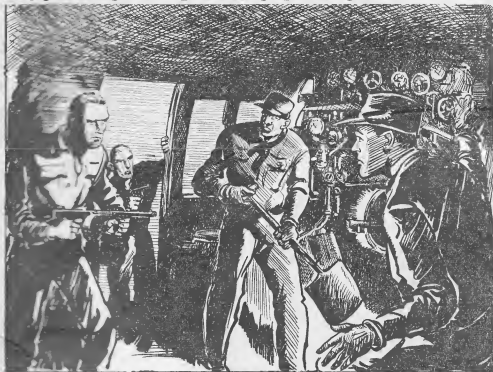


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METTOY
REGD

The train driver and fireman have a problem—how can they outwit two stop-at-nothing killers?

THEIR TICKETS FIRED BULLETS!



A DRIVERS' DREAM.

LARRY HENDERSON, leaning from the cab window of his battered old freight locomotive, looked on with envious eyes as the Blue Arrow rolled to a stop on the double track beside him.

The Blue Arrow was the pride of the Inter-State Railway Company. Its bright blue coaches were streamlined with glittering chrome, and it had long windows through which curious passengers peered out at Larry in his blue denim overalls and engineer's cap.

The Blue Arrow was hailed by one of the company's newest Diesels, with Tom Holm at the throttle. Grey-haired, bespectacled, Holm waved a lordly acknowledgment to Larry's salute, as the Diesel rolled past the freight locomotive with its long train of freight cars, gondolas, and oil tankers.

With the touch of a master hand on the brakes, Holm feathered the Blue Arrow to a stop in front of the station platform at Sagwa, a small city in north-west Montana.

"That's what I call railroading," Larry spoke over his shoulder to his fireman, Jake Sloan. "How I'd like to be running one of those beauties."

"Well, you can forget about it for the next twenty-five years," said Jake, wiping sweat and coal dust from his face. "There's too many men ahead of you with seniority. By the time you're ready to take over one of the passenger runs, you'll be ready for the retire-

ment pension."

Sloane's sarcastic comment shattered Larry's golden dreams of himself at the throttle of a train like the Blue Arrow.

With only seven years of railroading behind him, five of them as fireman and two as freight engineer, Larry knew he was lucky to be where he was. Many men, like Jake Sloan, for instance, never got any further than fireman.

Larry knew himself to be the youngest engineer on the road. True, he was only hauling third-class freight, his locomotive, a wheezy old coal-burner that should have been sent to the scrap heap a long time ago.

As third-class freight, Larry had to take the siding for every train the Inter-State operated over its lines.

"If I could only do something to bring myself to the attention of the Superintendents," Larry muttered. "I

as the train rounded a curve followed by Larry Henderson's wistful gaze.

The young engineer's glance swept over the crowd of people on the station platform. He inspected them idly while he waited for his signalman to bring him out on the main line again. Larry had another two-hour run before he would have to take the siding again, to make way for a night passenger train.

His eyes widened at the sight of a squad of about twenty soldiers lined up on the platform, rifles slung over their shoulders. The officer in charge was talking with two men in the green uniform of the State Police.

"Looks like the police haven't got those two escaped convicts yet," Larry remarked. "Yeah?" Sloan paused in the act of opening the firebox door with the end of his coal scoop. "I reckon the State

to stop them were blasted down as the convicts shot their way free with a captured sub-machine gun and a pistol. Now they were loose on the countryside.

Larry received the signal to get moving, and he twisted a lever to open the cylinders.

At that moment, the two State Policemen came bounding across the main line. Pausing beneath Larry's cab window, one of them cupped his hands over his mouth and shouted to be heard above the hiss of steam.

"I'm putting one of my men on your train, Henderson. Whenever you stop for water or slow down on heavy grades, Trooper Harvey will keep an eye on things to make certain the convicts don't try to get aboard and thus slip through our dragnet."

Larry waved an acknowledgment to the two State Policemen and, especially to Trooper Harvey, a lanky, wind-browed officer. Larry jerked a thumb towards the rear of the train.

Harvey would have to ride in the caboose back there with Roberts, the conductor, and the two brakemen or guards.

Railroad regulations were very strict about anyone, even policemen, riding in the cab of a locomotive.

Larry juggled the throttle and got his long train moving out on to the main line. He flicked a switch that lit the headlamp of the locomotive. The powerful beam pierced the deepening dusk of early evening, glistening on the shining rails that unrolled before the chugging freight locomotive.

Once clear of the town, Larry picked up speed, settling down in his seat for the long night run.

A STIFF CLIMB.

THIRTY miles out of Sagwa, the first grade of the run began to slow the train down. Sweat streamed down Sloane's face as he shovelled coal into the roaring firebox.

With a skilled hand, Larry nursed the throttle to get every ounce of power out of the labouring locomotive.

Larry's anxious eyes returned again and again to the steam gauge. The pressure was falling rapidly despite Sloane's best efforts. It would be touch and go to get the locomotive over the hump at the top of the grade before the steam pressure dropped too low. Larry could not afford to have that happen.

He was operating on a tight schedule with a fast passenger train coming along behind him soon. He had been allowed enough running time to get

SPECIAL COMPLETE STORY

want one of those passenger runs. But I don't want it about the time I'm ready for the wheelchair."

KILLERS ON THE LOOSE.

BESIDE him, the Blue Arrow began to move. Swiftly and smoothly, the crack train gathered speed as Tom Holm opened the throttles and fed power to the mighty Diesels.

The red lights of the rear car twinkled in the evening dusk

Police must have called in the Army to help 'em in the search.

"I hope they get those fellows. It ain't a pleasant thought to think that two killers are on the loose, ready to jump a man at any moment."

Two days before, Duke Ellis and Harry the Rat had broken out of the state prison situated five miles back in the hills behind the town of Sagwa. Both men had been serving life sentences for armed robbery and manslaughter.

They had killed again as they escaped. Two guards who tried

A type of banana grows to a length of two feet.

from Sagwa to a siding about ten miles on the other side of the grade, and there to pull off to permit the faster passenger train to pass.

If he lost steam here on the grade, and had to back down for another run, it would mean that a flagman would have to be sent back to warn the engineer of the oncoming passenger train.

Up here in the northern part of the state, the Interstate Railway was a single line of track curving close to the border of Canada. Heavy train traffic moved both ways.

The train despatchers had to know at any moment where every train was along the line, so that secondary trains could be sidetracked on one of the many sidings to permit faster trains to pass.

If Larry failed to get over this grade in time, he would throw a monkey wrench into the smoothly-meshed gears of the despatchers' time-tables and cause a flurry all along the line.

"File the coal to her, Jake!" Larry called to his sweating fireman. "It looks like we're going to make it!"

"Maybe!" Jake growled. "But I doubt it. This old wreck is due to fall apart any minute now, and this is as good a time as any for it to happen."

For the moment, Larry Henderson had forgotten about the two escaped convicts and the possibility that they might try to board a slow-moving freight such as this one. Now he was sharply reminded of it

when he happened to glance back along the train and saw bobbing lights moving along the tops of the cars.

Trooper Harvey, sweeping the train with the beam of a powerful flashlight, made his way up to the coal tender of the locomotive. With Harvey was Roberts, the conductor of the train.

"Are we going to make it, Larry?" There was an anxious note in Roberts' voice as he shouted to the young engineer above the roar of the locomotive exhaust. Roberts glanced at his watch significantly.

"We'll make it," Larry called back confidently.

The law man and the conductor swung down off the locomotive tender and jumped to the ground. As the train crawled past them at a snail's pace, Harvey swept the beam of his flashlight under the cars, searching out every possible place where the two convicts might be stealing a ride.

UNWELCOME GUESTS.

IN the cab of the locomotive, Larry Henderson granted his relief as his trained ears detected a slight change in the sound of the locomotive exhaust.

Jake Sloane heard it, too. He paused with his coal shovel poised, and grinned across the cab at Larry.

"We made it, Jake!" Larry

said. "She's over the hump—"

Larry broke off as he caught sight of his fireman's face. Sloane had paused in the act of closing the firebox door, and now he stood with mouth agape, his eyes wide with surprise.

Larry twisted around in his seat and saw two men swinging into the cab through the narrow opening between the locomotive and the coal tender.

"Duke Ellis and Harry the Rat!" he gasped.

"Right!" Ellis swung the muzzle of his sub-machine gun to cover the young engineer. "Now that you know who we are, it saves us the trouble of introducing ourselves."

Ellis was a hulking brute of a man, dirty and unshaven. His cold, grey eyes were the eyes of a killer. In Ellis's hands the sub-machine gun looked like a toy. Larry shivered as he saw the way the man's forefinger trembled on the trigger.

Behind Ellis, Harry the Rat kept his pistol trained on Jake Sloane. Harry was a small, slight man with beady, bright little eyes peering out of a narrow, peaked face. Like his companion in crime, Harry was dressed in overalls and blue shirt stolen from a farmhouse clothes-line, to replace the prison garb.

"Don't try anything!" Duke Ellis warned, his cold gaze never leaving Larry's face. "We're riding this freight to the Canadian border. If you want to go on living, just keep your nose clean. Don't try to

signal that State Trooper back in the caboose."

Jake and Larry exchanged worried glances. The young engineer shrugged and shook his head at the fireman, a warning for Jake to toe the line.

Jake nodded and resumed his job of scooping coal into the roaring firebox as the locomotive picked up speed for the down run to the siding ten miles away.

Ellis and Harry the Rat crowded up on the fireman's seat on the left side of the cab to get out of Sloane's way. But they never for an instant relaxed their vigilance.

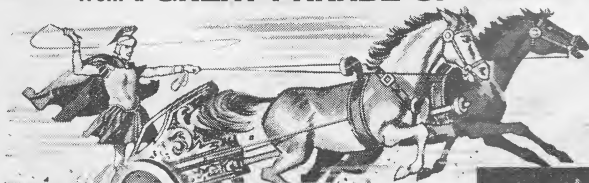
Larry cast a longing glance back along the train in time to see the Trooper's flashlight and Roberts' lantern wink out as the two men swung aboard the caboose.

There went the last chance of help, for the moment, at least. Larry glanced at the convicts, met the cold stare of Duke Ellis' grey eyes, and hurriedly switched his gaze back to the twin lines of steel gleaming in the headlight of the locomotive. Jake Sloane found a seat on a tool-box and sat there, chin in hand, staring at the gauges and dials on the front of the boiler.

Suddenly Harry the Rat let out a yelp and pounced on Jake Sloane's lunch-box, which he had just noticed hanging from a hook above his head.

"Ford!" The convict wrenched the box open and hauled out one of the thick

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ham sandwiches that Jake's wife usually prepared for him. "And a flask of hot coffee."

"Where's your lunch-box?" Duke Ellis demanded of Larry.

"Hand it over!"

Wordlessly Larry reached up, got his lunch-box, and handed it over to Duke. The convicts wolfed into the sandwiches and pie-like starving animals. When they finished, they tossed the lunch-boxes out of the cab window.

"The first decent bite I've had in two days," Harry the Rat belched loudly and grinned at the scowling Jake Sloane.

Duke Ellis leapt across the cab and seized Larry's arm as the young engineer began to close the throttle gradually to slow the train down for the siding switch half a mile ahead. Duke spun Larry around on the seat and slammed him against the wall of the cab.

"What're you trying to do?" Duke's blazing eyes were scant inches from Larry's face. "Keep this rattletap moving."

"I can't!" Larry protested. "I have to go on a siding up ahead. There's a fast passenger train right behind me."

"Okay!" Duke said sullenly. "But no tricks, remember. One wrong move and you get filled with lead."

FORCED TO LIE.

ALTHOUGH inwardly raging, Larry Henderson permitted no outward show of his anger as he began to close the throttle and open another lever to set the air brakes on the long train.

He reached up, grasped the whistle cord, and gave four sharp toots.

Harry the Rat bounced down off Sloane's seat, his face twisted with rage. He swung his cocked pistol at Larry. The engineer read death in the little crook's gleaming eyes.

"You asked for it!" Harry rapped the words out harshly. "Tryin' to signal that State Trooper back in the caboose, eh?"

"Take it easy with that gun," Jake Sloane interposed quickly. "He wasn't signalling to the Trooper. That was railroad man's talk. Larry was whistling up a brakeman from the caboose to open the switch ahead. Take a look back along the train and you'll see him coming."

Harry the Rat scrambled up on the coal pile and looked back over the train. A lantern bobbed into view back there as a brakeman began the long walk over the tops of the cars in answer to Larry's signal. Harry hurriedly jumped back into the engine cab.

"He's right, Duke. There's a brakeman coming this way. We gotta hide out somewhere quick."

"Right here!" snapped the quick-witted Duke, indicating a dark corner of the coal tender. "But don't make a wrong

move." Duke swung the muzzle of his sub-machine gun back and forth between Jake and Larry. "One peep out of either of you, and you both get it."

With that, Duke crawled into the tender beside Harry. The Rat and pulled a strip of tarpaulin over them, leaving slits through which their guns could cover the engineer and fireman.

Jake looked at Larry, a question in his eyes. Larry shook his head, a silent warning to Jake not to stir any more rash. The first wrong move and they would be cut down by the trigger-happy convicts.

Larry slowed the train to a crawl and sat there grinding his teeth in helpless rage as the brakeman swung down the ladder of the car next to the locomotive and ran ahead to open the switch.

Behind the brakeman came Trooper Harvey. As the freight rolled on to the siding, Harvey walked along the ground beside the cars, his powerful flashlight beam searching out every hiding place.

"Everything okay?" Harvey pounced beneath the cab window

and called up to Larry. "Everything's fine," Larry replied, forcing himself to speak in a natural tone.

"Seems like we've drawn a blank," Harvey said at last. "Those killers haven't come this way. Looks like I'm just wasting my time on this ride, but my orders are to go on with you to the terminal."

Moments later, the fast express roared past. Larry slowly reached for the throttle to take the train out on to the main line again, his mind churning out one plan after another as he tried to figure out some way to get the upper hand of the killers in his cab.

As the locomotive clicked over the switch points and out on to the main line, Trooper Harvey, aided by Conductor Roberts and his brakemen, gave the long freight train a thorough searching. This was the last stop now for Larry, who now had a long, fast run of nearly a hundred miles where the railway curves close to the Canadian border.

"You played it smart," Duke Ellis crawled out of hiding as

the train picked up speed on the main line, and he tapped Larry on the shoulder with a warning finger.

"Just keep on doing what you're told and you'll live to a ripe old age. We're riding with you to the Canadian border."

STEAM S.O.S.

TIME passed and the miles rolled by. A three-quarter moon emerged from behind scudding night clouds, and both the countryside in a pole glow.

But Larry Henderson had no eye for the beauty of the night as he leaned from his window into the windstream, watching the twin ribbons of steel unrolling before him.

Gradually, a daring plan began to take shape in his mind. He thought it over from every angle. It was risky, but he decided to take the chance.

"Shovel in that coal dust, Jake!" Larry gestured to his fireman. "We're on the downgrade, and now's the time to build up an extra head of steam."

Jake got slowly to his feet and stared at Larry in puzzled fashion. Larry gestured again. Jake nodded, opened the firebox door, and began scooping in coal dust from the tender floor.

Between shovelfuls, Jake cast wondering glances at Larry, plainly puzzled by the engineer's strange orders.

"Give her the forced draft," Larry snapped, making a great show of tinkering with levers and valve wheels in front of him. Duke Ellis and Larry the Rat were alert now, watching every move as Jake turned a valve and loosed a blast of live steam into the firebox.

Thick, black smoke gushed from the locomotive's smokestack, rolling along the top of the freight cars in a cloud that blotted the train from sight.

Larry eased off the throttle a notch, fingers on the brake lever, then reached for the whistle cord. He sent a series of toots forth—three short, three long, three short.

"Here! What's going on?" Duke Ellis jumped from his seat. "What's the idea of blowing that whistle like that? Are you trying to signal someone?"

"Just routine procedure," Larry explained. "We're starting on a long downgrade. I've just signalled to the conductor back in the caboose to check into the air compression in the brakes. I've got a heavy train behind me tonight. I'm going to need all the brakes I can get on this grade."

Again Larry jerked on the whistle cord, sent his morse code signal blasting forth into the night—three short, three long, three short—of the few things Larry remembered from his Boy Scout days. It was a steam whistle S.O.S., intended for the cars of Trooper



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MISCELLANEOUS.

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Ice covers one-tenth of the world's land surface.

Harvey far back in the caboose.

Evidently the two convicts knew no more about the Morse code than they did about rail-roading, or they would have twigged the S O S just as they would have seen through Larry's nonsense about the conductor inspecting the air compression of the brakes. All the brakes on any train were under the control of the engineer from the caboose.

It was different with Jake Sloane. He, too, remembered the call for help in the Morse code, and he quickly saw the purpose of the smoke-screen rolling along the top of the freight cars. That was to cover the approach of the State Trooper, who otherwise would be in full view in the bright moonlight.

Jake threw himself into the act. He and Larry put on a good show. Larry fiddled with the air brake handle, sending jarring crashes through the long train as he snapped the brakes on and off.

It all depended on Trooper Harvey now. Would the State Policeman be alert enough to catch the call for help from the locomotive?

KILLERS CORNERED.

"DROP those guns!"
Throw up your hands!"

Trooper Harvey suddenly materialized out of the smoke screen on the coal pile of the tender. His leveled revolver



(Continued from Page 18.)

His fingers were black from handling the type metal, and his eyes felt as if they were popping out of his head. The back was as stiff as if it belonged to some old man suffering from rheumatism, but the job was done.

Dick went downtown for news of Smithers. It was the first time the lad had been away from the King Street area since Smithers had left, and he was amazed at the change.

He walked whole blocks without seeing a man in the streets. Here and there were women and children, but no men.

Dick grew worried. It was like being in a town where a disaster had occurred.

When he reached the main thoroughfare, Dick saw more activity. Amid a cloud of dust, heavy procession of horse-drawn wagons, and drays all loaded with men, was slowly moving out of Melbourne.

Others carried their gear and possessions on wheelbarrows, which they pushed ahead of them, apparently without a

covered the two convicts.

Harry the Rat whirled with the speed of a striking snake. The crack of his automatic mingled with the deeper boom of Harvey's service revolver.

The convict buckled at the knees and went down, still jerking the trigger of his gun.

One of the wild shots struck Jake Sloane and spun him round as the fireman lunged at Duke Ellis with his shovel. Larry plucked the heavy shovel from Jake's hands and swung a wild blow at Duke, who was leveling his machine-gun at the State policeman.

The blow knocked the Duke off balance, and the burst of bullets that might have cut Harvey in two swept across his legs to tumble him head-first down the coal pile.

Faster than the eye could follow, Duke Ellis whirled and squeezed off a burst at Larry. The searing blast of the gun going off almost in his face sent Larry Henderson reeling.

Only the heavy shovel saved him from being riddled. Bullets struck the shovel to tear it from his hands. One of the slugs smacked into his left shoulder and slammed him back against the boiler.

Larry rebounded like a fighter from the ropes. Straight across the cab he leapt. Before Duke could squeeze off another burst Larry's hard fist connected with his jaw.

And all the hatred Larry felt for Duke Ellis and his kind thought of the weary miles that lay before them.

Near where Dick stood, a lanky, roughly-built individual with a scraggy beard was loudly talking to a group of awed listeners.

"Have a good look at me, boys," he was proclaiming. "I'm Billy Dawes, just down from Clunes. I'm the sole owner of the Huckle Billy claim. I've taken out ten thousand pounds worth of the yellow stuff in a fortnight, and I'll show you what I think of money! Someone give me a light!"

He struck a cigar in his mouth. One of the group handed him a lighted match. Instead of applying it to his cigar, he set fire to a five-pound note and lit his cigar with that.

"Ever seen a man do that before?" he demanded, turning to Dick Hardy. "I bet you haven't! Well, it'll be something to remember—you once saw Billy Dawes light his weed with a fiver! But there's plenty more money where that came from. What are you doing here, anyway? Get in the diggings, lad—where they're picking up nuggets like peanuts!"

He put a bundle of notes into Dick's hand.

"Take these and buy yourself an outfit, you son of a gun. Dick did not want to accept his money, but Billy Dawes was not in the mood to argue. He threw the notes at Dick's feet and strode away, followed

was behind the blow. Duke collapsed, tried to fight his way to his feet again, then went down for good as Larry seized a long wrench and cracked the convict behind the ear.

Sick with the pain in his wounded shoulder, Larry Henderson stood there swaying with the lurch of the locomotive. He felt his senses reeling. Fighting off the blackness that threatened to engulf him, Larry fumbled his way back to his seat.

He leaned against the throttle and pushed it shut, then he opened the air brake handle to bring the long train to a slow stop.

Two days' passed in the hospital before Larry was permitted to receive visitors in his room. His first visitor was a grey-haired, portly man with horn-rimmed glasses who brought an air of authority with him into the room.

Larry's eyes popped at the sight of him—James Richardson, superintendent of the Inter-State Railway.

"How are you, Henderson?" Richardson seated himself on the edge of Larry's bed and grasped his hand.

"Fine, sir!" Larry replied. "But how are the others—Jake Sloane and Trooper Harvey? They won't tell me anything in this place!"

"They're going to be all right," Richardson replied heartily. "Sloane got a bullet

by his new friends. Suddenly, Paddy Burke's lorry appeared with Paddy driving the horses, and several men perched amid a mountain of gear.

"Why, if it isn't the lad from the printing office," he laughed, pointing his whip at Dick. "Is it with us you are, young fellow? Come on now, there's room for another."

"Are you off to Clunes?" asked Dick.

"Don't be talking to me about Clunes," replied Paddy. "Clunes will all be pegged out by now. We're for Mount Alexander, the richest goldfield the world's ever known. Come with us and with us will be a rich man in a month!"

"On you get, chumme," joined in one of Paddy's passengers. "You're young and strong. The diggings is the place for you."

A strange feeling swept over Dick Hardy. He did not recognise it, but it was the gold fever.

"Right you are," he shouted excitedly. "I'll be with you, but I've got to get my things."

"Can wait," Paddy roared. "Every minute might be worth a hundred pounds. Get what you want and catch us up. We'll be on the Mount Alexander road."

Dick dashed to the printing office, made a bundle of his few possessions, wrote out a notice and nailed it to the door.

What to do with the key was problem, but he took it round to the general store, knowing

through the hip, and Harvey had both legs broken.

"Jake may not be able to resume his fireman's job, but we'll find something just as good for him. And I've also got some plans for you, Henderson."

"Yes?" Larry's eyebrows

lifted. "You're the type of young man I like to keep my eye on," Richardson nodded as if he had suddenly arrived at some conclusion. "Your idea of the SOS by the whistle, and the smoke-screen look pure and cover Harvey, shows that you can think in an emergency."

"When you report for duty again, Henderson, there'll be a passenger train waiting for you. Not the Blue Arrow, of course, but a good, fast run that will give us a chance to see what you can do in that line. Good luck now, and get well soon."

"But what about the convicts, sir?" Larry called out after the superintendent.

"They'll get a chance to belong," Richardson paused in the doorway and smiled back at Larry. "At least, Duke Ellis is. Harry the Rat died before they could get him to a doctor."

With a wave of his hand Richardson was gone, leaving Larry to settle back on his pillow and dream up pictures of himself at the throttle of one of the Inter-State's crack passenger trains.

THE END.

that the old lady would be unlikely to leave for Clunes. When he reached there, however, he found her hurriedly packing up. "I've made a cart stood outside."

"Don't leave any keys here, young man," she told him. "What's the use of keeping a shop here now? But the men on the goldfields will need stores, and that's where I'm going. I'll make a fortune if I start quickly enough."

Dust churned up by countless feet was rising in a cloud along the road to Mount Alexander.

Dick pushed along as if he were going to a fire, searching the traffic for a sight of Paddy Burke's wagon. It was hard to tell one from another—they were all grey with dust.

At last, he saw it plodding along behind a small cart piled so high with baggage that the owner had to walk and the donkey in the shafts could scarcely pull it.

"There he is!" Paddy Burke greeted him, waving his whip. "Now we're all here."

A chuckle went up as Dick tossed his bundle on board.

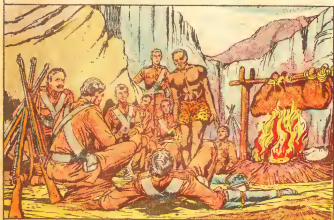
"It's glad to see you are," the Irishman grinned, giving him a hand up.

Dick felt a surge of excitement as the wagon rumbled on its way. He was off to the goldfields, to his fortune and fortune lay ahead!

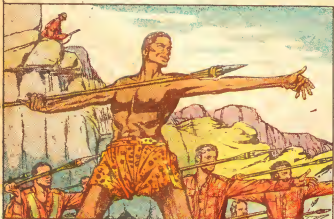
Next Tuesday Dick and his companions become targets for the guns of bushrangers!



3—"Well done, Mtala!" gasped Bill Keene, as the tracker climbed to his feet. "It was nothing. Bwana," shrugged the Masai, then pointed at the dead lion. "Much food for us." On Mtala's instructions, the troopers lashed the animal's paws together, then slung it on a pole. Keene's men, cut off from the main British force, had to live off the country. The problem now was how the patrol could bypass the Zulu sentry. A screen of elephant grass, fixed to a second pole, provided the answer.



5—Keene and his men were in the heart of Zululand. Returning from a patrol, they had discovered their base camp wiped out. Knowing that the main Zulu army was between his patrol and the British line, Bill Keene had decided on a bold plan—to capture Cetewayo, the cruel Zulu king! That evening, the patrol camped at a place pointed out by Mtala. Here, natural gases came to the surface. By lighting one of these gas "jets", a smokeless fire was produced on which to cook the lion.



7—Soon, every man had made his own spear. But a spear is no use unless you can throw it. Mtala smiled as he watched the clumsy efforts of his "pupils". "No, no," the Masai shook his head. "That not right! Look, I show you." Holding a spear across his chest, at the point of balance, Mtala lined up the weapon on a nearby bush. Using his left thumb as a sight, he hurled his spear dead on target. "Now you try," the tracker grunted. Gradually, with Mtala's help, the soldiers improved.

Next week the "rookie" spearmen test their skill—fighting against the Zulu experts!



4—Watching his look-out post on the cliff top, the Zulu sentry saw nothing suspicious. He did not notice that a "clump" of elephant grass was slowly inching its way across open ground! Behind the grass screen, which was carried by Bill Keene and Mtala, the British soldiers were bunched together. With the lion slung before them, the men moved forward a few paces every time the Zulu sentry had his back turned. Finally, after what seemed hours, they crossed the open space and reached safe cover.



6—Mtala explained that while in the jungle, the men would eat mainly cold meat. The smoke from a cooking fire would give their position away. Next day the troopers learned another lesson—in spear-making! Though they had rifles, ammunition was scarce, and, more important, a spear struck silently. Once the shaft was selected, Mtala showed how to fit a sharpened stone head on the end. Using a large stone as a pivot, the correct balance was found by trying different stones on the head of the shaft.



8—One of Keene's men did not join in the spear-throwing class, however. Perched on a rocky ridge behind the British camp, Private Sam Clark was on sentry duty. From his position, Clark could see the country for a good distance in each direction. During the past hour or so, Sam had not seen so much as a bird flying past. Suddenly, the look-out tensed. Just over a hundred yards away, approaching the British position along a rocky path, was a party of Zulu warriors!